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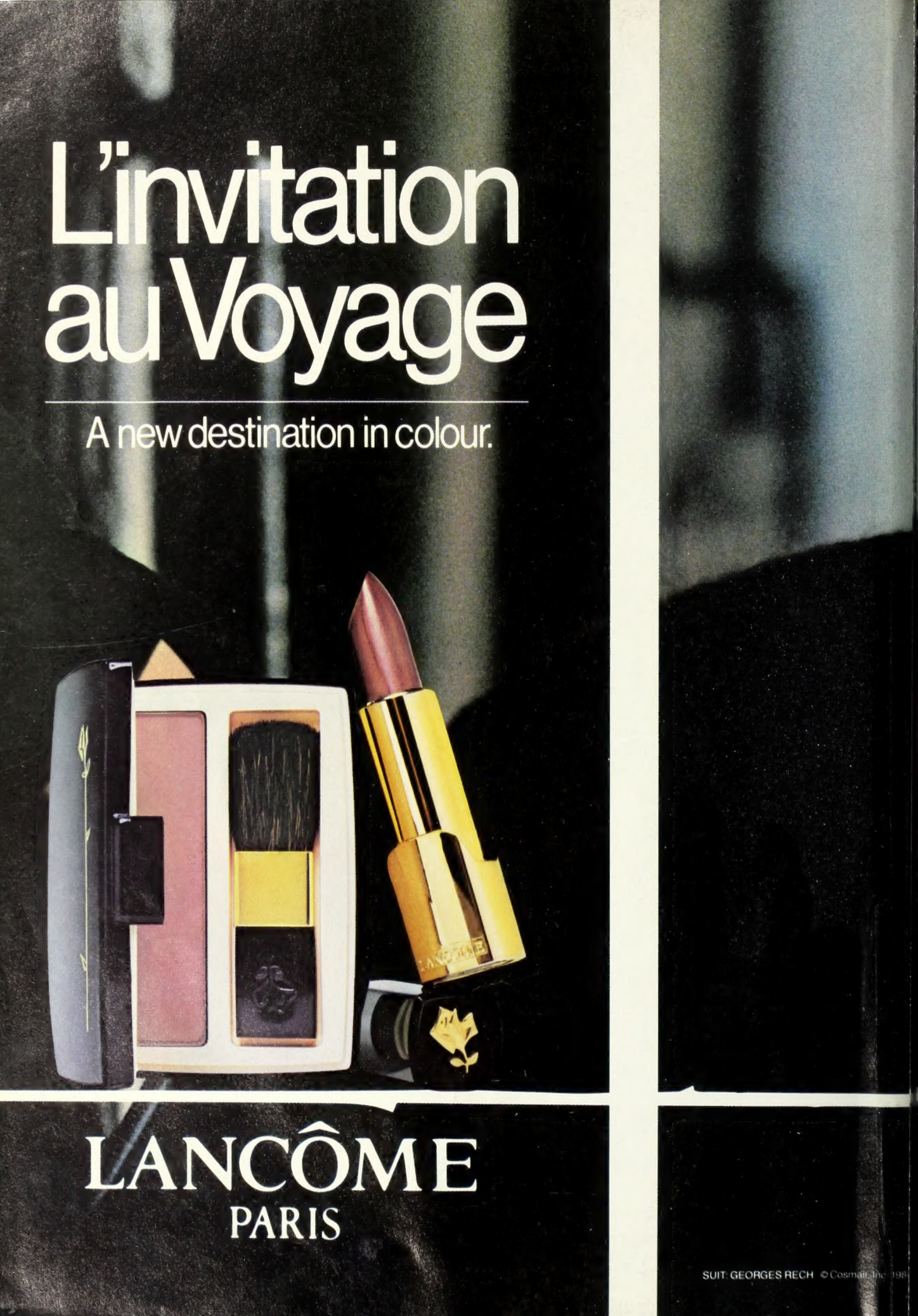
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The sunlit Parisian sitting room of Emmanuelle and Quasar Khanh. Story page 130. Photograph by Oberto Gili.

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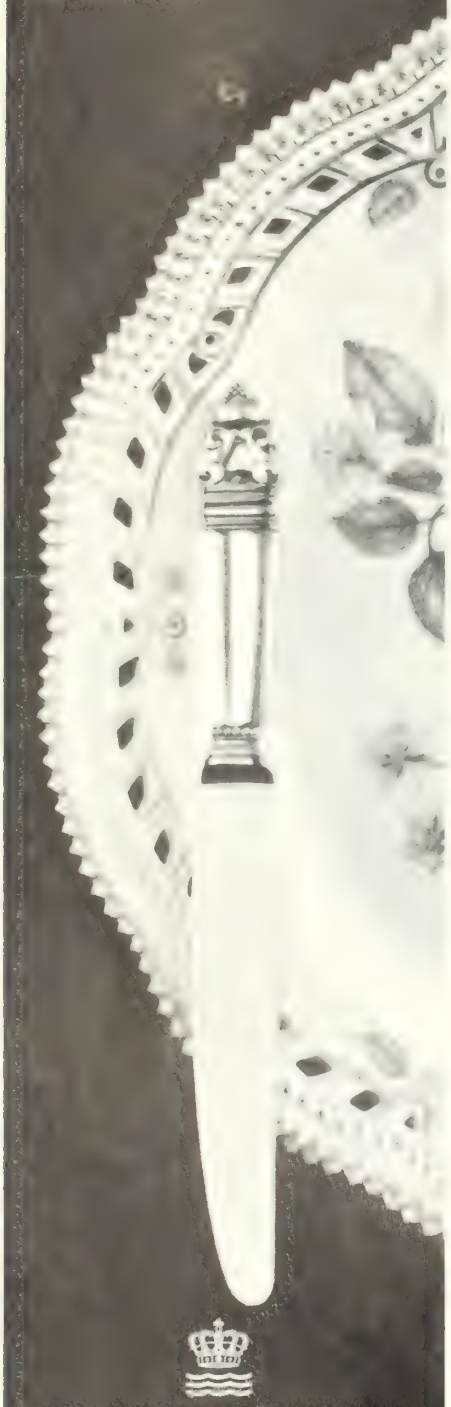
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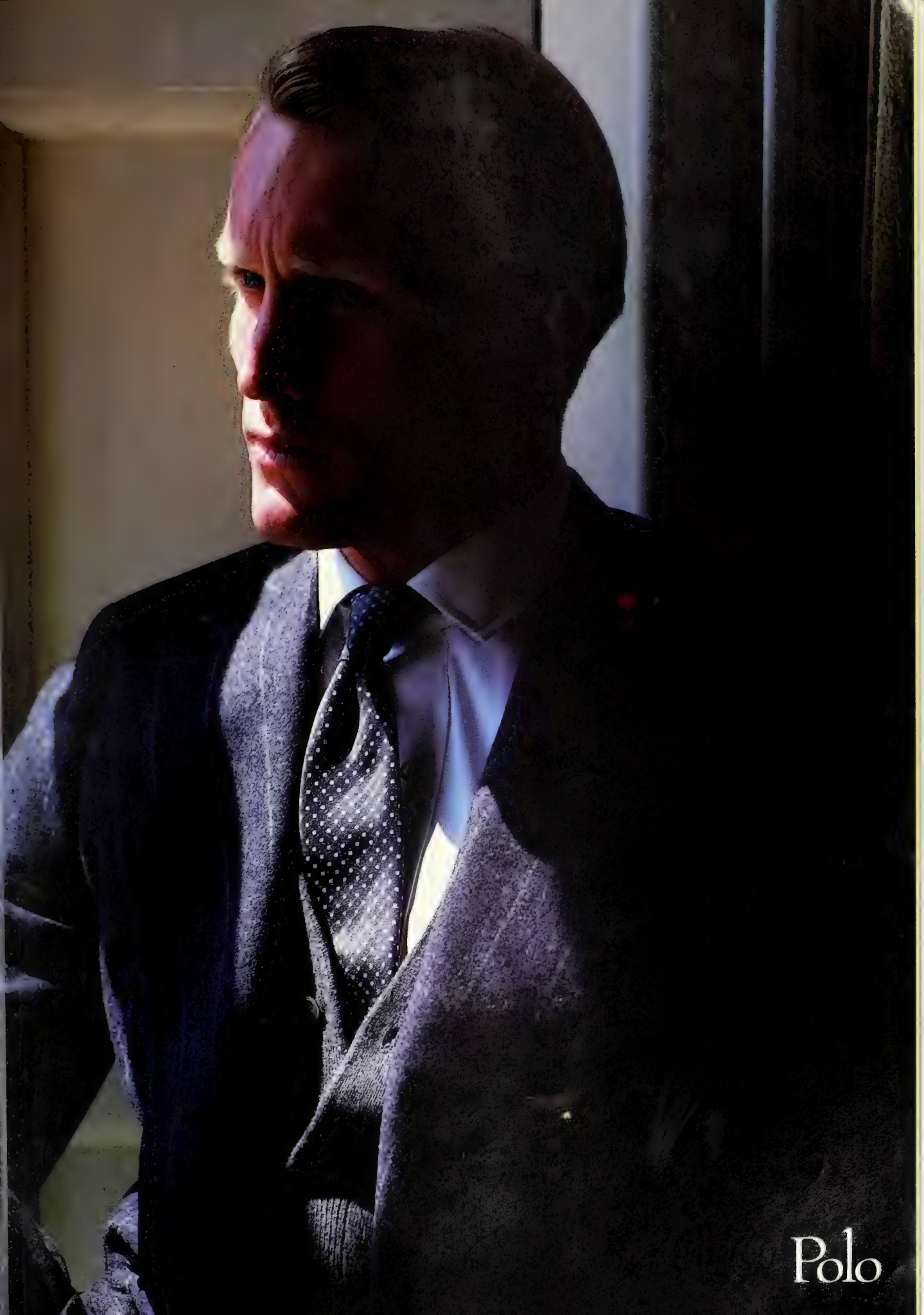



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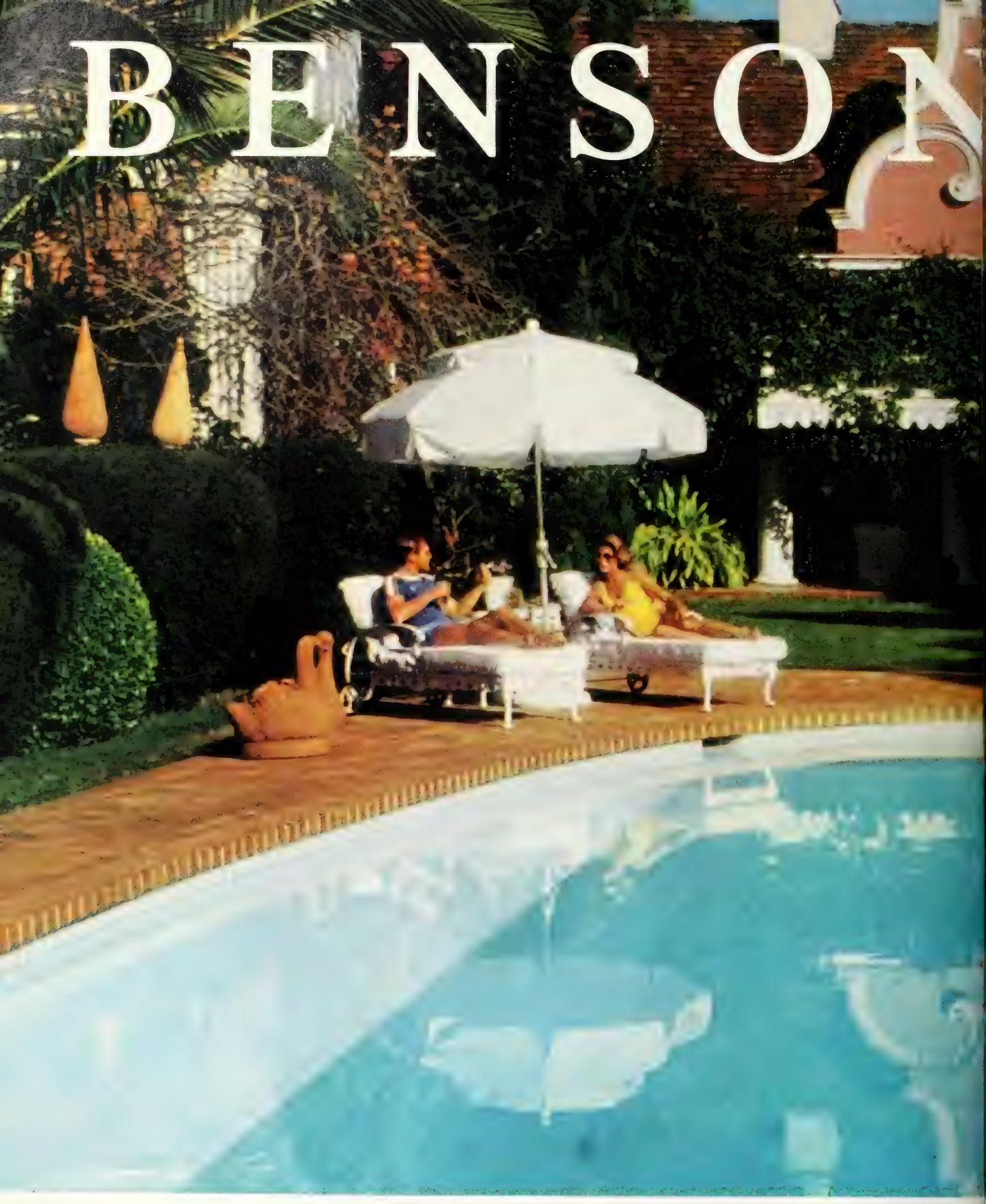
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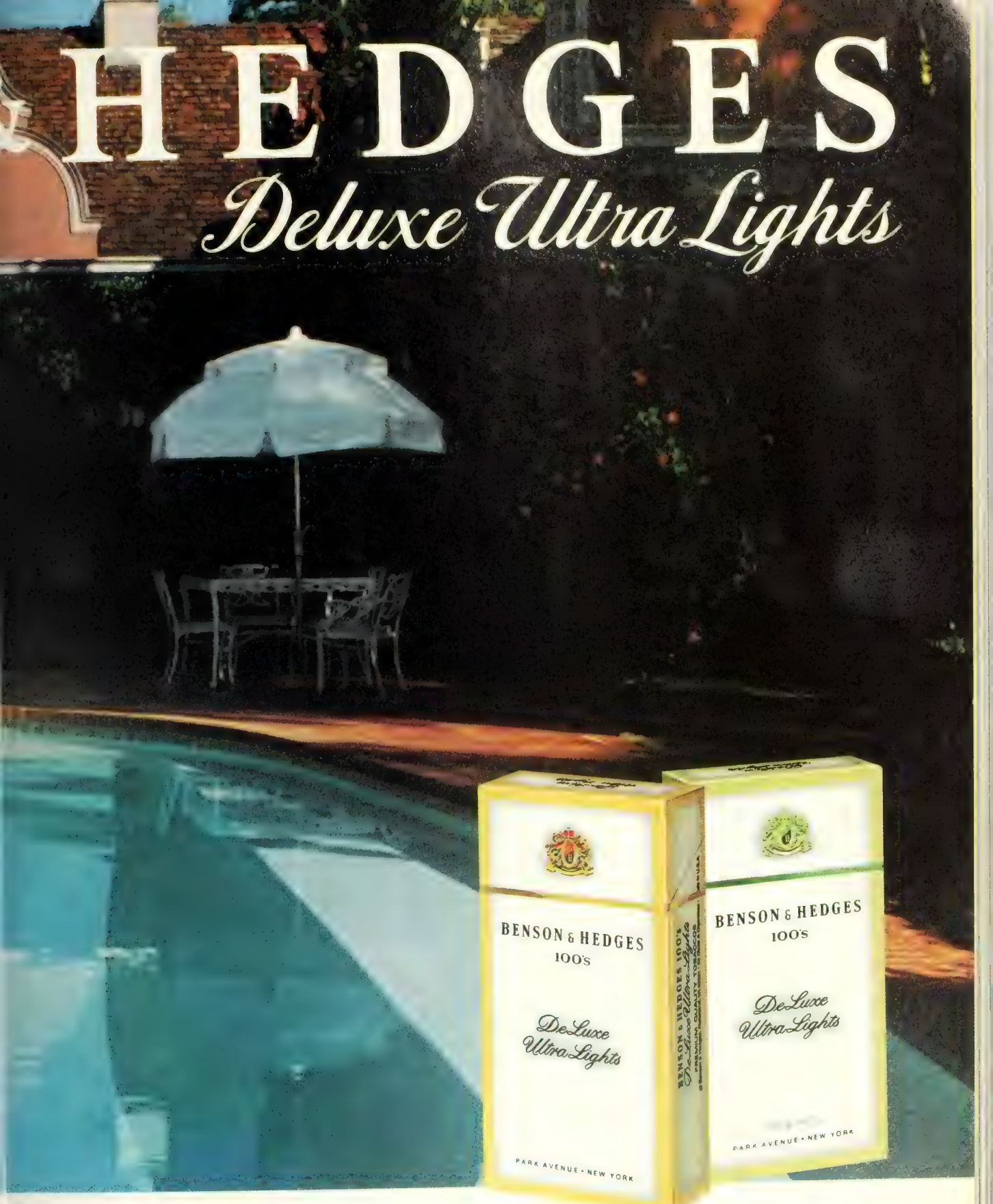


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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

What better way to wrap up the summer than to visit the garden at the White House, first designed by Rachel Lambert Mellon at the request of President Kennedy in 1961 and recently restored under her guidance with the encouragement of President and Mrs. Reagan. It has always been known as the Rose Garden, although many other flowers grow there, of course, such as the spectacular tulips in bloom when Mick Hales took our photographs earlier this year. As the background for White House ceremonies, the garden has been seen by many over the past twenty years. But this is the first time that it has been photographed for its beauty alone, and we are pleased and proud to have it in the pages of House & Garden, along with a text by its creator, Mrs. Mellon, which first appeared in the premiere issue of the journal of the White House Historical Association.

As Mrs. Mellon relates, over the years the garden has changed with time and the maturing of its plants. What hasn't changed is the extraordinary beauty of the garden, which continues to illustrate President Kennedy's understanding of the importance of gardens and their appeal to the sensibilities of all people.

To aid you in your fall garden planning and bulb orders, Mrs. Mellon's planting list can be found in Garden Pleasures, page 254.

With summer on the wane, most of us are now taking a second look at the rooms we live in when our more relaxed outdoor life draws to a close. Perhaps in a throwback to school days, we find September signaling that more serious things are starting up again, and we need rooms that will comfort and temper the demands of living a productive life.



The ivory leg of an Indian ottoman in the London drawing room of John Stefanidis's house on Cheyne Walk.

None fit that description quite so well as the rooms in John Stefanidis's house on Cheyne Walk in London. In this distinguished National Trust house in Chelsea the rooms are as comfortable as they are grand, thanks to the soft seating in soft colors that the designer chooses to live with. On pages 156–165, you will see how the usual hard-surface coffee or cocktail tables have been rejected here in favor of giant ottomans. In the sitting room, a generously sized ottoman is protected by a fake-fur throw from the twenties; in the drawing room, an equally large ottoman from India, with beautiful ivory legs, has been upholstered in a serviceable cotton, inviting feet-up comfort and providing extra seating at larger gatherings. When a hard surface for drinks is required, a large tray is easily placed on the appropriate ottoman.

Thirties rattan chairs in the Houston house designed by Mark Hampton provide another happy solution to this comfort requirement, page 140. The wide arms of the chairs do double duty as tables in a room where extra tables for the abundance of chairs could have turned an otherwise serene space into a jungle of legs.

Mark Hampton is a decorator who understands that it is the promise of comfort that makes a room visually inviting. You will hear more from Mark on this subject next month, when we begin a new House & Garden column by him, On Decorating.

Still another lesson in decorating for comfort is afforded by the story on Ogden Codman Jr. and the rooms he designed for The Breakers, page 208. If the rooms have a vaguely familiar look, as Pauline Metcalf says in her text, it's because Codman's work became the standard for good hotel-room decorating throughout the twentieth century.

Alison Lurie, in her essay on The Benevolent Tower, page 174, suggests that the age of the twelfth-century Tower in Wales permits it to assimilate anything. Today it seems primarily to assimilate writers—guests of the writer-owners who continue the Tower's long history as watchtower and sanctuary.

A very modern house can also assimilate the unexpected—such as the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century glass given pride of place by the house with a Modernist stripe, page 148.

New or old, a house as sanctuary for cherished treasures, family, friends, even strangers is a thought we encourage you to take with you as you ponder the pages of this issue.

Lou Gropp

Editor-in-Chief

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ON THE WALL

The reappearance of the bold picture frame

By John Richardson

Antonin Proust—no relation to the novelist—relates how Manet used up seven or eight canvases on his portrait before doing it all over again in a single sitting. All the same Manet would not let Proust see the finished painting until a frame had been found. "The frame is vital," Manet explained, "without a frame the painting loses a hundred percent."

That was in 1880. Some fifty years later, modern architects consigned the cornice and other traditional moldings to oblivion, and in the same spirit did away with the traditional picture frame—"a redundant trimming," one of them said. Minimal baguettes in aluminum or wood became the order of the day, and not just for contemporary art either. Some of the more with-it museum directors tried to minimalize the old masters: they would take Italian primitives off the mulberry-colored velvet that was so suitable, polish them up, and exhibit them in plexiglass shadow boxes. It never worked. Underframed and overvarnished, old masters tended to look specious, like reproductions of themselves in a coffee-table book. But now as the minimal approach is on the wane, cornices and decorative features are no longer architecturally suspect, and the picture frame is creeping back into serious favor.

Nonetheless I found myself derided, a year or two back, for putting a Frank Stella into a very broad silvered frame instead of the traditional baguette. An anachronism, I was told. But to my mind, the boot was on the other foot; aluminum moldings may look fine on certain contemporary things but are beginning to look dated on others. The wide silver frame on the Stella reinforces a bold image in a bold way; architecturally speaking, it *contains* it, above all establishes its scale. Likewise, when I put an Andy Warhol portrait into a heavy black-and-gold, pseudo-Spanish frame—best described as Post-Modernist baroque—I was accused of "going too far." Nonsense! When you hang an over-life-size portrait on your wall, it will look like poster unless it's put in a heavy frame. A all events, Warhol approved: he eve asked the framer's name.

The framer is of course the old-es tablished (1907) Manhattan firm of Ju lius Lowy Inc.—I think the best in thi country because they have by far th largest stock of moldings and antiqu frames, and the largest team of exper craftsmen. Lawrence Shar, who too over Lowy's from his father, Hilliar Shar, went along with the Minimalis vogue—he had no choice, and his pec ple do it to perfection—but at the sam time he kept his joiners, gilders, an carvers busy devising frames in ever conceivable historical style, from sev enteenth-centur Dutch to Federal from High Renais sance to Art Deco from Rococo t American Western The only problen with Lowy's is th *embarras de richesse* The permutations o molding, finish, an mount are so grea that choosing a fram can be a length process.

For an example o framing in the gran dest manner we can not do better than th Régence frame whic Lowy's adapted fo the Rubens *Self-Por trait with his Wif and Son,* formerly i the collection of Mr and Mrs. Charle Wrightsman an now in the Metro politan Museum. Bu *(Continued on page 36*



A Claude-François Desportes and gilt frames at Julius Lowy in New York

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Larry Shar of Lowy knows exactly how far to go, whether playing *down* a family's Gilbert Stuarts, or playing *up* a Madison Avenue dealer's Dubuffet doodle

(Continued from page 32) the chances are that frequenters of East Coast museums and galleries will have been regularly exposed to Lowy's handiwork—and not just in the form of frames, either: Lowy's are also picture restorers. And although I am maniacally conservative when it comes to restoring, relining, and revarnishing paintings, I can vouch for the fact that their staff is dependable and above all cautious.

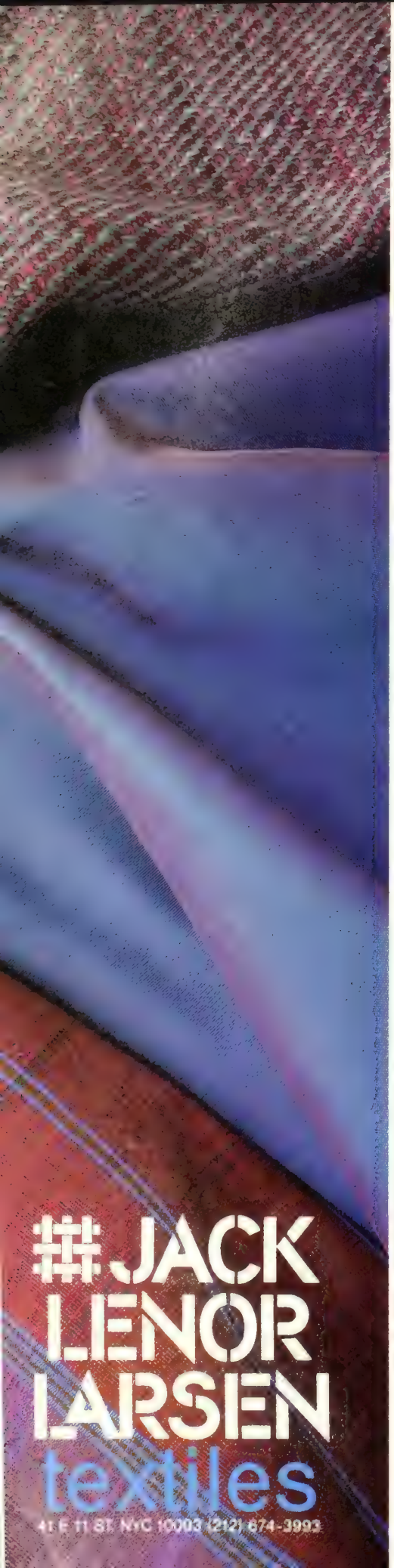
However, framing remains Larry Shar's principal passion. Growing up in the business, he developed an instinctive eye for what works and what doesn't, whether he's framing a gold-ground Sienese primitive, a Bierstadt of the Rockies, or a Rauschenberg assemblage. And Larry knows exactly how far to go whether he's dealing with a WASP lady intent on playing *down* the family's Gilbert Stuarts, or a Madison Avenue dealer intent on playing *up* a Dubuffet doodle. He's especially firm with the latter. He hates overkill.

Though galleries make up the greater part of a framer's clientele, Lowy's rapport with New York dealers is not just a matter of framing, as I learned when I first came to this country in the sixties. In the course of going from one gallery to another, I became aware of an inconspicuous, preoccupied-looking man in a raincoat who was always being ushered in or out of inner sanctums, whether at Knoedler's or Wildenstein's or the Metropolitan Museum. This turned out to be Hilliard Shar's partner Max Fagelson. When I came to know Max better, I discovered that a prominent framer is well placed to discover the innermost secrets of the art market: what collections are coming onto the market, what condition things are in, who had bought what, and so on. Since Max was one of the few people in this most devious trade who knew where all the bodies were buried but didn't gossip, he was admirably placed to act in confidential negotiations. Larry Shar continues this tradition.

But back to a less arcane aspect of framing: fashion. Larry insists on the crucial role that this plays. For instance, now that Salon painting is no longer in disgrace, the heavy Victorian frames made of composition as opposed to carved wood, which *pompier* subjects require, are once more an important item in a framer's repertory. The only trouble is that Hilliard Shar, like most other framers of his generation, threw out these ornate horrors as beneath a craftsman's contempt, so the son has had to duplicate the original "compo" process. As a result Lowy's can now do justice to the most simpering of nymphs, the most opulent of Orientalist extravaganzas. Likewise, the Art Deco frames, which Larry Shar confesses he was still discarding as recently as five years ago, have become such a hot item that Lowy's have been obliged to cater to this High Camp fad with a line of modish moldings that set off Deco dreck to perfection.

This is not the place to go into the history of framing beyond emphasizing that it inevitably reflects the history of painting and the decorative arts. Take Manet and the Impressionists. Although arguably the first modern artist, Manet was in some respects a traditionalist; when he declared that a painting gained enormously from being seen in a frame, he meant a great big gold one. The Impressionists, on the other hand, were more progressive, favoring simple Neoclassical moldings which they would sometimes paint cream. Degas, who had especially strong feelings on the way his work was presented, even went so far as to design frames—in a modified Louis XVI style—that would still conform to the taste of a discriminating collector. And when, in the course of time, the Impressionists became the most sought-after school on the art market, dealers—consciously or not—followed Degas's lead and exhibited their wares in French eighteenth-century (as opposed to French nineteenth-century) frames. When authentic ones ran out, they turned to *(Continued on page 38)*


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Degas, who had especially strong feelings on the way his work was presented, designed frames in a modified Louis XVI style

(Continued from page 36) reproduction. Meanwhile, in order to harmonize with the all-white look promoted by decorators like Syrie Maugham, the irreplaceable eighteenth-century gilding had been scraped off. In place of the gilding framers came up with a guanolike surface that tried and failed to approximate the tonality of a Monet or Picasso but succeeded all too well in matching the nubbiness and faint grubbiness of the ubiquitous off-white rugs. Fortunately Lowy's craftsmen are past masters at negotiating the virtues of chic pickers.

In recent years pickled Régence has given way to a taste for Spanish baroque frames. The massive moldings that used to provide a dramatic foil for mournful Madonnas and lachrymose Christs are now more often to be seen gracing a Picasso Dora Maar, a Braque mandolin, or one of Miro's sexually explicit pictograms. Alas, in the face of excessive demands on the part of dealers from Tokyo to Zurich, the supply of antique Spanish frames is virtually exhausted. As a result framers are doing a thriving business in reproduction Churrigueresque.

My own walls go to show that I have nothing against black-and-gold Spanish frames on contemporary art; however, if Madison Avenue galleries and Park Avenue living rooms are any indication, these have become a commercial cliché. Meanwhile some of the more sophisticated dealers are turning to the ebonized frames found on the seventeenth-century Dutch paintings or walnut panel frames in the German Renaissance manner.

By far the best solution for modern paintings was devised by that perceptive dealer, the late Paul Rosenberg. Rosenberg had the good sense to consult two great artists who were under contract to him in the twenties and thirties: Picasso and Braque. Together they conceived what has come to be known as the "Picasso" frame—basically a modern version of the old Italian Renaissance "panel" or "plate" frame: a broad flat area between two simple moldings. The only difference is the finish: two tones of highly burnished gold (shiny for the moldings, matte for the flat bit; silvered in the case of Marie Laurencin). This molding continues to be enormously popular because it is simple, architectural, adaptable, and strong enough to contain the boldest image. No less important, it has turned out to be timeless. Far from appearing dated, "Picasso" frames look as modern today as they did when Mr. Rosenberg first sprang them on the public well over fifty years ago.

In this context it is interesting to see how the newly opened Museum of Modern Art has gone about reframing their great collection of paintings. Virtually all the old frames have been jettisoned and replaced with baguettes (substantial ones, not mere strips) that have been finished in different ways: rubbed gold for precursors like Cézanne and Gauguin, black for the Cubists, and so on. By and large this system works; it homogenizes very disparate things; it makes for harmony and continuity; and it enhances William Rubin's hanging, which manages to be eye-catching and eye-opening, historically logical and didactic in just the right degree.

However, as I wrote earlier on, powerful images require containment. Fauve paintings in particular cry out for the heavy frames which a discriminating eye usually accords them. For instance, the beautiful Fauve Braque of La Ciotat (1907) used to have far more impact and scale—above all scale—when it was framed in an emphatic black molding than it does in its present minimalized state (I know: it hung opposite my bed for ten years). True, the requirements of a museum are very different from those of a private house. Still I think it unwise, even for a museum, to frame everything alike. It has an institutionalizing effect. It reminds me of what happens to individuals when they join the Marines. Shouldn't frames, like clothes, reflect or enhance whatever is within? □

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THE ART OF THE TOWEL.

Eat? Or dine? The rise and fall and rise again of the dining room.



Just a few years ago dining rooms seemed to be on the list of endangered household species, a list that included butler's pantries, libraries and dressing rooms. Even a critically acclaimed off-Broadway play (*The Dining Room* by A.R. Gurney, Jr.) was based on the notion that this room was some sort of archeological artifact now useful only as a clue to the cultural and social changes of recent years.

But the latest news from the Home Front is that dining rooms are now high on many people's most-wanted lists and they're asking architects and designers to put them back into their lives.

This resurgence may be due in part to the Great American Gourmet Revolution now at its zenith. If you're going to shine at *nouvelle* and all those other cuisines, you want a proper theater in which to display your new-found masterpieces.

Whatever the reasons for their comeback, the new dining rooms are very different from those staid rooms of yesterday. Gone is much of the rigid formality. In its place, there's now a feeling of informal ease and comfort, reflecting today's more casual attitudes. In the Southampton dining room designed by Gary Crain shown here, you can feel this current mood. Even though the look is very Country/Traditional, the room is sparked with an informality that is thoroughly contemporary. Part of this effect results from the sprightly flower-strewn wallpaper and the inviting wing chair with its matching upholstery (from Schumacher's *Chez Moi* collection, the pattern is "Belle Isle"). The light-catching DuPont Dacron® and silk draperies and the imported wool Dhurrie rug counterpoint the period table and chairs in a very modern way, too. In all, a harmonious background for the social activity we call "dining."



Historically, separate rooms set aside solely for the purpose of eating didn't show up until well into the 18th century. As with many other things having to do with the cooking and serving of food, the idea of a separate "eating room" can be credited to the French and to the reign of Louis XV. The differentiated dining room helped to transform plain "eating" into fancy "dining." What had been a biologic necessity was turning into a key social ritual.

In keeping with this ritualization of dining, all sorts of customs were developed: England's Charles I had ok'd the use of cutlery several hundred years before with his declaration "It is decent to use a fork"; the central table surrounded by chairs, termed *"table à l'anglais,"* was adopted world-wide; sequential serving of meals, one course at a time "in the Russian manner" became another international standby; special dining room protocol—as well as all kinds of special dining room furniture—soon cluttered the eating rooms of the world.

In the two hundred years after Louis XV, dining rooms ultimately became the focal point of almost every household, no matter how rich or how humble. These high-flying days continued well into the middle of this century. Then, a few decades ago it seemed as though we were back in the pre-dining room era again, and were being asked to

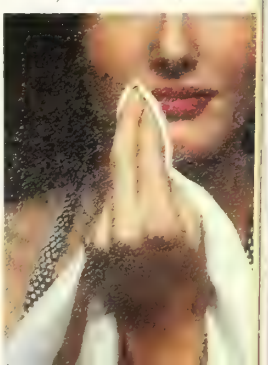


Schumacher's Illustrated Notes on 20th Century Taste. One of a series.

make do with the bit of space dubbed "the dining area" that was tacked onto some other room. Happily, this trend now seems to be reversed. Great meals are once again being served in great-looking dining rooms.



When F. Schumacher and Company opened up its shelves for business in the 1890's dining rooms were often imposingly sumptuous, even regal. All sorts of sumptuous and regal fabrics suited to the era were ordered from those Schumacher shelves. For today's dining room renaissance, Schumacher continues to meet the multiple needs of the present generation of decorators and designers. By offering the world's most comprehensive inventory of decorative fabrics and wall-coverings reflecting every era of design with unequalled authority. By maintaining a color palette that is unusually sensitive to the nuances of changing times and fashions. And by providing a handpicked selection of the finest rugs and carpets of the world. Whether it's for a new dining room, or a houseful of other distinctive rooms, decorators and designers, wending their busy way in search of perfection, almost daily say to themselves (with an ingrained belief and a sigh of relief), "...surely, Schumacher."



BARNUM OF THE BIZARRE

Robert Ripley challenged a more innocent generation to "Believe It or Not!"

By Alexander Cockburn

With his wild, indiscriminate, and childish curiosity, Robert L. Ripley built up one of the great child's collections of all times. Most children have their tiny collection of bugs, coins, stamps, and so forth. Ripley filled room after room in house after house; and when he ran out of rooms and houses he stored the crates of his treasures in warehouses around the country. Anything strange in the 201 countries he journeyed to that met Ripley's maniacally acquisitive gaze was bought, parceled up, and sent home. Humans were not exempt and when Ripley, in the course of his wanderings, met Wenseslao Moguel in the Yucatán, who had survived both a firing squad and the *coup de grâce,* he hired him at $75 a week to display his bullet-riddled features in one of the Ripley "Odditoriums."



Ripley with Javanese Hindu deity in his 18-room New York apartment around 1940.

Ripley retained three or four people to scour the world in search of the bizarre and he was forever adding to his collection which he proudly valued at $2 million. Geoffrey Hellman, who visited him early in 1940 for a *New Yorker* profile, reported on the surreal atmosphere of the 27-room Mamaroneck household with its chastity belts, Aztec masks, five hundred beer steins, the skeleton of a two-headed baby and a photograph of himself with a woman leper, "the most horrible looking human being in the world." Over these and hundreds of other treasures brooded his equally odd housekeeper, Mrs. Almuth Dold, formerly the wife of a Russian baron, once in a Turkish harem as a guest and finely cultivated in the arts of graphology, astrology, palmistry, phrenology, numerology, and tea leaves. Married to an efficiency engineer, she ran Ripley's house for him, acting as his hostess and according to Hellman, "conversing easily with his guests in the barroom and at table."

Fanatical collectors are mostly a repressed lot, stumbling uneasily about in their unconscious, and Ripley was no exception. He spent hours every day compulsively rearranging all the pieces of his collection, before pottering about the waterways of his estate in various forms of marine transport. Occasionally, the libido burst through his surface *pudeur* in some striking ways; for example, he insisted that a lady sword swallower in one of his "Odditoriums" should ingest not tempered steel but a neon tube at the end of an electric flex. He was, in sum, like every eccentric uncle one has ever heard of with all the appeal of those delightful and childish creatures, as I suddenly realized in the course of a visit to the Ripley Museum in St. Augustine, Florida.

Like many children growing up in the dying years of the British Empire I had been surrounded by a collection of the Ripley genre. Curios and antiques collected by the innumerable members of my family who had been servants of that empire filled the house, and in the case of my grandmother's place, a few miles down the road in southern Ireland, imperial memorabilia crammed not only display cases in the main house but also a small museum at the bottom of the wall garden.

My grandmother's father had been an Irish adventurer who achieved a successful and prosperous career as a colonial governor: from bleakly inauspicious beginnings administering Newfoundland he had passed through government houses in the Bahamas, Jamaica, and Ceylon before ending up as governor of Hong Kong at the end of the nineteenth century. So the display cases and the museum were filled with the consequences of a thousand Victorian shopping expeditions from Kingston through Kandy to Kowloon; carved figures, vases, baskets, scrolls, howdahs, *(Continued on page 46)*

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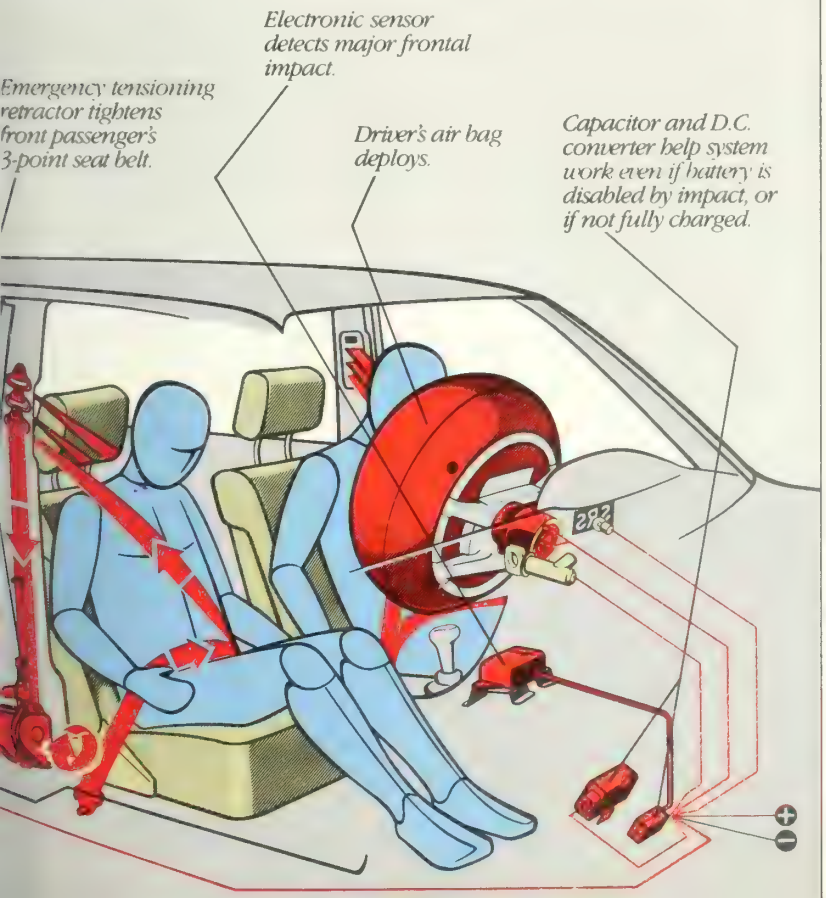
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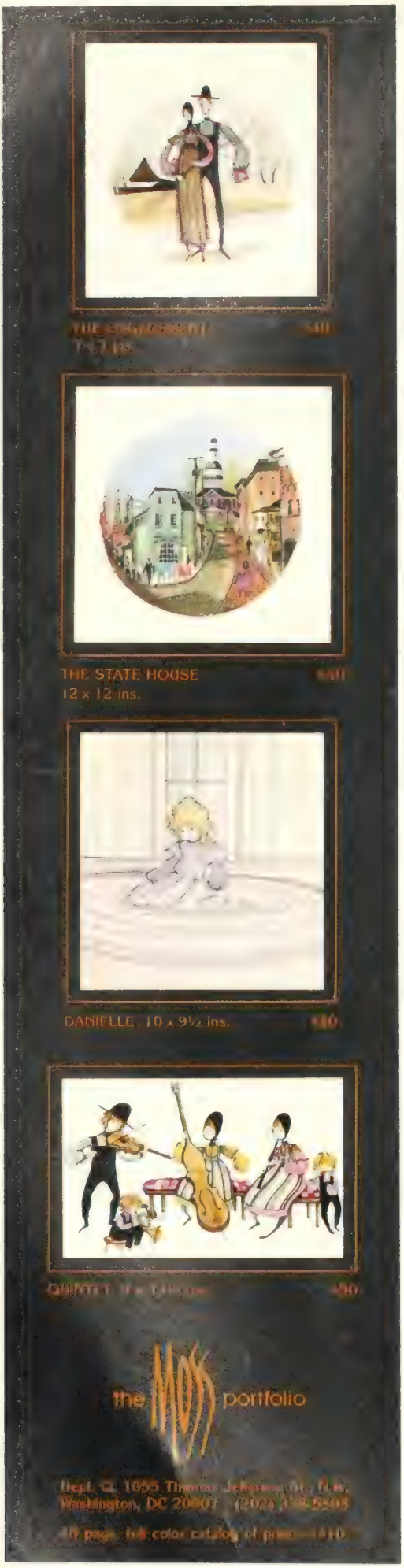


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(Continued from page 42) palanquins, robes, a carved dug-out canoe, ivory, jade, mounds of imperial medals and—best of all for a child—a veritable arsenal of spears, clubs, shields, swords, daggers, and arrows whose tips were darkened with traces of what my grandmother said was curare.

No collection of this sort was complete without its shrunken head. The one in my grandmother's museum had supposedly been acquired by Great-uncle Maurice on one of his diamond-prospecting expeditions up the Orinoco. Great-uncle Maurice had been something of a black sheep—another essential perquisite of any family's imperial collection—and we thought it quite possible that he had done the processing himself, shrinking this trophy down to the size of a tan grapefruit with long black hair which hung, out of my reach, from one of the museum's beams. Irish damp began to overwhelm the museum in the end and so most of its contents were crated up and sent off to scholarly institutions to languish in pedantic and well-labeled obscurity.

For me, as for many others, the appeal of the Ripley collection is that it immediately re-creates that childlike view which is the dawn of curiosity. There in the St. Augustine museum were the curio cabinets, the palanquin, and, grinning amiably from its display case, the shrunken Jivaro head. All around me were crowds of happy children, speculating just as I had done o shrinking techniques and the toxi properties of native South America poisons, peering at the waxwork figur in the entranceway of the bucktoothe Ripley in his middle years looking we coming and avuncular.

I cannot speak for the seven othe Ripley Believe It or Not museums sca tered around the North American cor tinent but for anyone in norther Florida, wishing a respite from Inte state 95 or Flagler's great Spanish-styl Ponce de León Hotel in St. Augustin (first major structure in the U.S. bui with poured concrete), the Ripley mu seum is well worth a visit. The museur reminds us what the world was like be fore public television, the late Sir Ker neth Clark, or universal colleg education. In the American pantheo Ripley should stand in the same corne of the hall as such great entertainers a H.M. Stanley, P.T. Barnum, and Wa Disney; less serious than the first, les outrageous than the second and with out the latter's degrading addiction t the cute. Of the time when newspaper had their star writers always travelin the world in search of strange tribes places, and customs Ripley was Sanch Panza to Stanley's Quixote; and, whil the latter sent serious dispatches fror the darkness of Africa Ripley, in a mor frivolous era, would return—as he di from China in the thirties—with small glass vial, now in the St. Augus tine museum, *(Continued on page 52*



On his 1932 trip to the Orient, Ripley spent time with shark-worshiping cannibals during a two-day dance festival in Papua, New Guinea.



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(Continued from page 46) labeled as "the only unbroken object in the city of Chapei after the Japanese invasion—a bottle of Chinese mange cure!" Ever the resourceful uncle, Ripley could make even a tiny glass bottle interesting.

Ripley was born in Santa Rosa, California, on Christmas Day, 1893. He had been an unhappy, bucktoothed child burdened with a stutter, the name Leroy, and a mother widowed when he was twelve whom he helped support by polishing gravestones. He was a talented artist and after a stint on some California papers, Ripley came east and got a job on the old New York *Globe* as a sports illustrator. Short of material one December day in 1918 he strung together some odd sporting achievements in an illustrated panel. A *Globe* editor titled it "Believe It or Not!" and within a few months, responding to surging reader interest, Ripley's employers were asking him to do one a day.

True success came in 1929. Simon and Schuster published *Believe It or Not!,* "A Modern Book of Wonders, Miracles, Freaks, Monstrosities and Almost-Impossibilities, Written, Illustrated and Proved by Robert L. Ripley." The book ran swiftly through several reprints and William Randolph Hearst sent a simple telegraphic directive to his men in New York, SIGN RIPLEY. Ripley's salary went from $10,000 to $100,000 forthwith and within a few years he was a major journalistic institution. About nineteen million newspapers carrying his feature were sold each day and he reached eighty million readers. He received an average of a million letters a year and launched radio and television series (the Ripley cartoons and programs of today are not, I should hasten to say, particularly satisfactory). By 1940 there were three "Odditoriums" and a number of Ripley trailer shows touring the country. Still immensely successful—though on the threshold of an era less sympathetic to his brand of journalistic showmanship—Ripley died in 1949.

He grins boyishly from the picture in the pamphlet available at the museum, but Ripley, like many compulsive travelers and collectors, seems to have been a complex and inhibited character. He was married for a few years in the twenties to a Massachusetts beauty queen but thereafter remained single. He had many cars but could not drive. Slightly vulgar, he was the quintessential Innocent Abroad, forever amazed at the strangeness of the world, forever determined to contain it within the confines of pragmatic American common sense. At the peak of his fame, at the end of the thirties, he liked to boast that he had visited 201 countries out of a possible 253. In the manner of globe-trotters of that period he liked to be photographed in each country set against the appropriate fauna and flora, looking manly in tropical kit and with white-and-brown sports shoes.

Just to make sure that guests to his home in Mamaroneck got the point, he had the miniature flags of his country collection displayed in the bar and a compass sunk into the floor of his sun porch, along with the directions and number of miles to all the many hundreds of places in the world more exotic than the small town in California where he was born. The child who polished gravestones had a taste for the macabre but not the occult, the incredible but not the false. He was a collector for the common man, with a marvelous ability to reduce space and time to the status of Collector's Item.

The first *Believe It or Not!* book has more of Ripley's personality in it than later products. "In Lhassa, Tibet," Ripley wrote, "there is a man with a horn growing from his forehead to the extent of thirteen inches. The reflected glory of the golden sun bounces off K2 and Mount Everest on this curious promontory each morning as its bearer makes his obeisance to Gatama while turning a prayer wheel. The Horned Kaffir of Africa, like the Horned One of the Himalayas, is still alive. I saw him in London several years ago. He seemed self-centered and satisfied, though black and a Christian."

As that last sentence suggests, Ripley lacked the Disney blandness. Although, as he said of himself, he made his living out of the proposition that truth is stranger than fiction, he did not feel it necessary to view all the world's truths with equal sympathy. Discussing the Hindu pilgrims at the Kali-Ghat temple in Benares—"Sky-facers who hold their faces rigidly upward until unable to bend them back; Up-arm men, *(Continued on page 54)*

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(Continued from page 52) who hold up their arms in the same way until they wither away"—he concluded sternly, "Most of the wretches that we see around the holy places of worship have no idea what their attitudes and symbols mean; all are intellectually degraded and some are mere fakers."

As collector for the common man Ripley had a keen appreciation for qualities he esteemed, such as time and effort. One exhibit at the Ripley museum in St. Augustine is a table with a label informing one that it was made of "11,000 separate pieces of wood from 29 different species of tree, by Klaus Finzer of Innsbruck. . . ." Normal museums would have stopped there, but Ripley adds the all-important news that the table was intended "as a wedding gift for Finzer's daughter who entered a convent and never had use for it. It took nine years to complete." Throughout the museum there are such monuments to human pertinacity; a tiny bottle painted on its interior surfaces by manicured fingernails, a railroad arc bridge made of "more than 3,100 ordinary tooth picks" by Joe Gross of Brooklyn, a vase 24 inches high wrought from the bladder of a camel. There is a stamp covered with the Constitution of the U.S. and Bibles the size of a fava bean.

Ripley knew the common man appreciated not only time and effort, but also their expression as value. So he made a particular point of collecting bizarre types of money from around the world. Cases in the St. Augustine museum are filled with stones, shells, whales' teeth, beads, pictures, symbolic objects that have served through history as a means of exchange.

Part of the delight of the museum comes from the rhythms of its eccentric accumulation, from these samples of money, to the camel's bladder, to the Iron Maiden of Nuremberg, to the final Barnum-like touch of "The Bathtub Marshall." This last, found on the top floor of the museum, is a tribute to the curator's ingenuity in making good use of every square foot. Behind a glass partition is an antique bath with dripping tap. In the half-filled bath sits a uniformed figure and the label informs us that this is "The Bathtub Marshall . . . Marshall de Castellane (1788–1862), Governor of Lyons, France" who "had three uniforms and three sets of medals, one for day wear—one for sleeping and one for bathing."

Although it disappeared after his death, by all rights one of Ripley's most cherished possessions, the Chinese junk in which he sailed on inland Florida waters near his winter quarters at Palm Beach should be anchored in St. Augustine's Matanzas Bay, off the Castillo de San Marcos. Visitors to the museum would thus get in advance that intimation of the exotic Orient which Ripley found so alluring and which caused him, after his first trip to China, to sign his cartoons Rip Li for a while. The Orient—outlandish and mysterious—lay at the very heart of his appeal, as the adventurous uncle who has knocked about the world, seen a thing or two, and returned to tell the tale. □

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Discover The Pleasure Of Plants

Nursery Marketing Council

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Clarins is the Problem-Solver.
Clarins created light, non-oily products to effectively treat the fragile skin tissue surrounding the eyes. (Oily formulations actually cause eyes to "puff-up"!) For 30 years, Clarins gentle eye contour treatments have proven to be successful in the Clarins Parisian "Institut de Beauté". Based on natural plant extracts, these treatments are dermatologically and allergy-tested.

Clarins Eye-Contour Gel helps to reduce puffiness.
Soothing actions of camomile and cornflower relax and calm delicate eye contours. Marigold and other natural plant extracts help to relieve irritation. Recommended as a morning refresher to diminish puffiness and dark circles. A favorite among contact lens wearers, Clarins Eye-Contour Gel may also be applied during the day, sparingly, even over makeup.

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Nourish. Revitalize. Soften and smooth. These are the actions of Clarins Eye-Contour Balm. Rose and cornflower extracts, among other natural (non-oily) ingredients, act to moisturize and help fade expression lines — restoring the youthful appearance of eye contours. See lasting results with daily application.



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Consult with Clarins' Skin Care Specialist and have your personal Beauty Prescription completed. And, receive a sample of a Clarins product, selected just for you! Clarins specializes in skin care for face, bust, body and tanning. Act today and join millions of women throughout the world who depend on Clarins to answer their skin care needs.

Eye-Contour Gel with natural plant extracts	• Helps reduce puffiness, bags, and dark circles • Soothes and refreshes with camomile and cornflower • Gently relaxes with calming marigold
Eye-Contour Balm with natural plant extracts	• Minimizes expression lines and first signs of aging • Moisturizes and revitalizes eye contours • Softens with light, non-oily ingredients such as rose and cornflower

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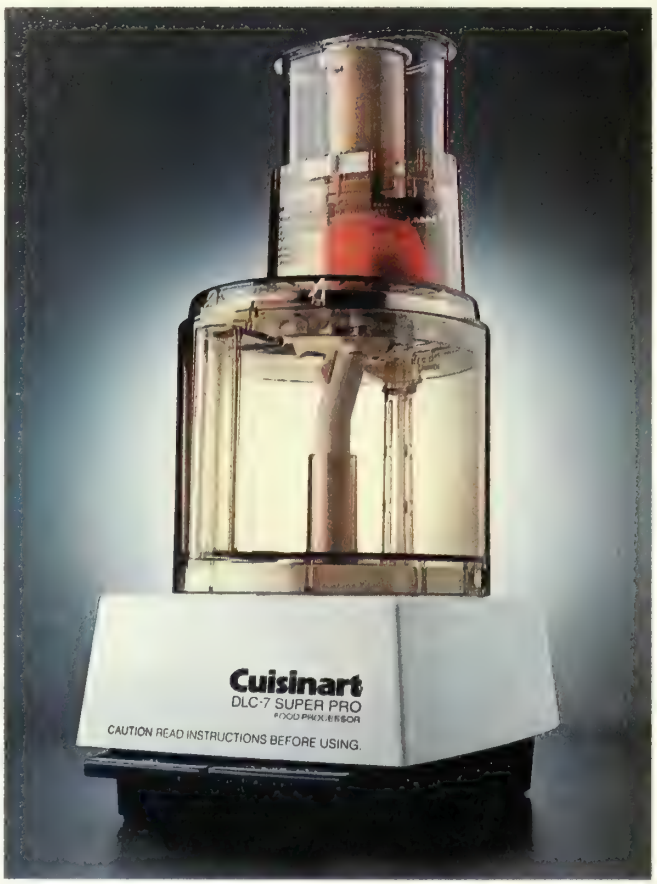
IT CAN DO ALL THE THINGS YOU WANT IT TO DO.

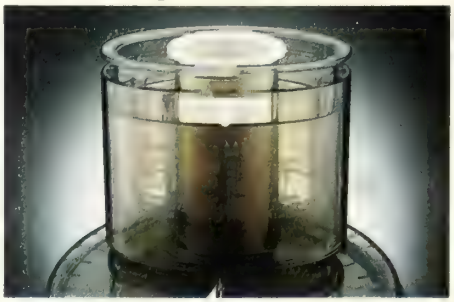
The Super Pro has a new powerful and efficient motor that can do things other food processors can't do. It can knead up to four pounds of bread dough, or five batches of 3½ pounds each, one after the other, without overheating or stalling. It can chop two pounds of meat at one time, in 30 seconds.

The new improved Cuisinart Large Feed Tube, with less effort than ever before, lets you make whole, precise slices from food as large as tomatoes and potatoes, oranges and onions.

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IT REALLY IS EASY TO USE.

The same extraordinary engineering that went into making the Super Pro so unconventionally versatile, also went into making sure that people would use it after they bought it. So it's easy to use. In fact, the DLC-7 Super Pro incorporates a radically improved Large Feed Tube that is *much* more convenient to use. Now you don't even have to turn the feed tube. A totally new locking system lets you work this new Large Feed Tube with one hand. After your first demonstration of how to use the Cuisinart DLC-7 Super Pro you'll wonder if that's all there is to it. *That's all there is to it.*



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MORE INFORMATION

For recipes, as well as more information about our food processors, cookware and our magazine, "The Pleasures of Cooking," write Cuisinarts, Inc., 411 (I) West Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830.



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The sandwich bottom (found in every piece of our Cuisinart Cookware) is also what makes everything from your soufflés and casseroles to your scalloped potatoes turn out the way you want them but don't always get them. The sandwich distributes heat quickly and evenly, both sideways and upwards. So there are never any hot spots; only a constant, even heat flow over the entire cooking surface.

Our casserole is made of highest quality stainless steel that cleans easily and retains its luster *forever.*

Buy the specially marked DLC-7 Super Pro during September from a participating retailer and you'll get a certificate good for your free 3 quart covered Cuisinart casserole.

It's a perfect example of getting something truly good at no additional cost.

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LUGGAGE, ART, AND LOVE

The hard and soft of it or why art history can be a lesson for life

By William Hamilton

History of Art seemed too good to be true as a college course. You sat in the dark, watching gorgeous slides with a guide explaining everything—so much more pleasant than reading. The precepts were pretty simple too. Art has no confounding underlying logic like algebra and meteorology. There's not much to learn beyond identification and an attractive way to express your opinion. There are some principles, but they are more clever insights than irrefutable snares of superhuman logic.

I was delighted when it was pointed out Western art could be neatly divided in two. A very clear split between hard and soft art was revealed to us students in the slide-show darkness. As soon as you started thinking this way, pictures and sculpture, even buildings looked either sharp, slick, and hard or soft, vague, and intermingling.

The slide would flash on the screen, the professor would pace in front of it, his pointer moving like a feeler, lecturing away with his shadow crawling back and forth across the bottom of the colorful glowing projection like a big black bug. "Linear!" he would proclaim if it were the work of an artist who liked the edges of things sharp and hard and definite; "Painterly!" he'd say if things were a little softer and more blended.

I found this split to be a very appealing insight, fitting right in with the rest of the dualities revealing themselves in my education at the moment. Philosophy class (in a way that would have annoyed Mrs. Stewart, my childhood Sunday-school teacher) was just pointing out how without evil would you even know there was such a thing as good? In history class there was an exemplary soft-versus-hard struggle between church and state; in English, John Donne was writing love poems that sounded religious one minute and religious poems that sounded like love poems the next. On our own, we were all reading D.T. Suzuki's *The Awakening of Zen*. Nothing was quite so clear to me my sophomore year at college as the yin and yang of absolutely everything:

"Let me confess that we two must
be twain,
although our undivided loves
are one,"

as I tried to explain to a girl at Vassar.

After getting educated, I discovered knowledge didn't help anywhere near as much as I thought it would to solve the problems gathering to greet me in the world. It turns out education can only add *(Continued on page 60)*



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BEAUTIFUL SKIN NOW AND FOREVER

(Continued from page 58) resonance, not guidance, when the bank calls to tell you you're overdrawn or she leaves for Australia with your best friend.

Making money can get anxious, but romance can get positively heartrending. Money operates in its own nasty little (or nasty big) kingdom, by its own rules. It's a self-enclosed, extremely straightforward tyranny you can't escape. Romance is something you can, and often must, escape.

The best ways to alleviate the pangs of love gone wrong are travel and art. Always run away when you can. Get some distance and go look at pictures in a museum and you will survive. Many more people than you might think are smiling at the Goyas in the Prado and the Van Dycks at the Tate because they're grateful the portrait in their head of that heartbreaking face has been replaced, at least for the moment.

Running away requires luggage, and luggage, like art, falls into hard and soft categories. Each philosophy has an extensive following. Hard luggage is the luggage of limitation. Decisions must be made. At a certain point the damned thing just won't close, no matter how many of you sit on it (and if you're running away, chances are there's just you). Soft luggage, like a painting by Rubens, always has room for another cherub or nymph. It's generous stuff, receiving every afterthought, extra, and souvenir with the willingness of a fat lady taking one more bonbon.

But hard luggage has other advantages. It passes neatly as a pill into the digestive tract of transportation. At the check-out counter, it's gone. You're free. Soft luggage has a way of coming right along with you, hanging from you, and even falling asleep against you. In an old Surrealist film by Salvador Dali and Luis Buñuel called *The Andalusian Dog* some fellow keeps accreting stuff until he's dragging along, among other things, a piano, a birdcage, and a dead horse. That's soft luggage for you. Lurching along with this exhausting and ambiguous flexing weight, maddening in its tendency to torque, for its shifting center of gravity, in the way it works as a pendulum directly against whatever rhythm you try to establish to progress is the price of its willing generosity at the outset. Just as hard luggage with its snappy finality is something like money, soft luggage is rather like love.

Recently relieved unexpectedly of half a romantic duality, vowing never again, once again, with hard, clear reason to fall for that soft, painterly seduction—I packed my two slick and swift little hardball suitcases and decided to go to London to replace what was on my mind with a look at the Wallace Collection in Manchester Square, which I heard had just been gloriously refurbished.

Sir Richard Wallace died in 1890. He was the bastard son of the Marquess of Hertford. Both he and his father collected *(Continued on page 64)*

The Tappan Cooking Center. One beautiful cooking idea on top of another.



Here's the perfect space-saving combination! The Tappan Cooking Center. Up top it's a Tap 'N Touch® microwave, for quick and even cooking. Below it's a banquet-size, self-cleaning oven. Inside it's a waist-high broiler. And in between it's a range with our Lift' N Lock® top for easy cleaning. To see how beautifully you can cook in just 30 inches of kitchen space, visit your nearby Tappan dealer today.

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(Continued from page 60) art in a way democracy and modern times have made impossible.

Small museums and collections have a charm and intimacy you don't find in the big ones. Who, of anyone lucky enough to go to the Frick Collection in New York City, hasn't stood there feeling blissfully at home, wishing the other people would please leave and dinner would be served? The trouble with the Frick is it is too romantic. You get to thinking: surely, she never would have left me if I lived here—if we lived here, together, hands intertwined, those great portraits peeking through the windows of their frames at happy us, strolling by.

Happily for the wounded lover, the Wallace Collection doesn't make you wish you lived there, hand in hand with someone. If the Frick is a bower of bliss for honeymoon dreams, the Wallace is forty years of marriage with thick doors to slam on your way into rooms of armor, daggers, and naked girls, leaving Madame with her porcelain rosebuds and virtuous portraits of noblewomen.

Examining the steel anger of armor and weapons, I got into conversation with a guard: "In eleven years only one woman ever stopped to look at it, and she was a very odd-looking woman indeed, sir," he said.

"Excellent," I replied, brooding on the ghastly tools of bone breaking and blood spilling, a rueful smile at my lips. No wonder there's war, I reflected, otherwise you get killed anyway, by romance.

Sir Richard, or maybe it was his father, seems to have especially loved eighteen-year-old girls of the eighteenth century as they were painted by such great masters of that sublime cheesecake as Boucher, Fragonard, Watteau, and Nattier. When you rise up the stairs from the armor, you come into throngs of life-size nude nymphs by Boucher. "Hi there!" What a nice welcome! Then, perfect pink girls swim like tropical fish in rows of tanks down one long gallery. Even the hardest broken heart must soften a bit at this cheerful sight.

Eventually, you wind up in the great salon of the house with the phantom Wallaces reconciled in the most exalted imaginable harmony, a scene from nineteenth-century grand opera. Not only is this vast room lined with staggering masterpieces, but they are hung in vast, symmetrical assemblies. To balance such a stunning portrait as Rembrandt's greatest one of his son Titus, five in, third row on the left side of the east wall, is Frans Hals's *Laughing Cavalier,* five in, third row on the right side. There is an outrageous laugh in all this somehow: the methodical Sir Richard laying out and balancing his treasures like a nineteenth-century shopkeeper putting together a window display.

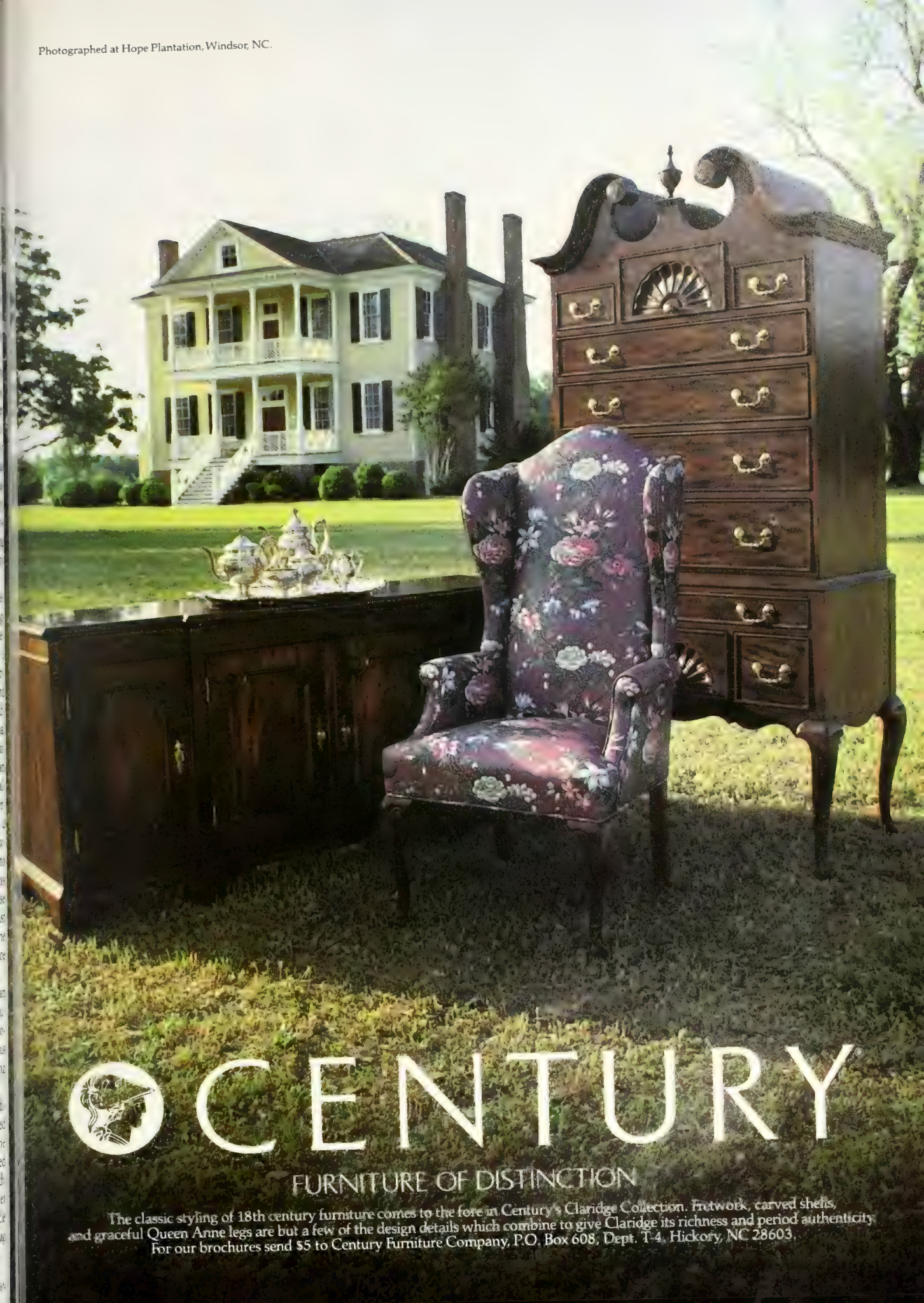
No sophomore hoping for a ninety in History of Art could find purer examples of the hard and soft approaches to picture painting than those of Nicolas Poussin's *Dance to the Music of Time*—clear, cool, linear, and hard as the windshield of a new car—and Jakob Van Ruysdael's soft and broody, mysterious and painterly *Landscape with a Waterfall,* which are hanging across from each other in this stupendous gallery.

I kept walking back and forth between the two. Good old yin and yang, like a pair of jump cables, were recharging my battery. What a grade I could have gotten balancing the abstracted, spiritual content of the hard and linear Poussin (gods and goddesses dancing in gay, oblivious eternal abandon to music provided by a cynical-looking, lyre-plucking musician representing Time) against the naturalistic content of Van Ruysdael's painterly landscape and then springing a flashy academic somersault by showing the naturalistic picture referred to eternity while the gods and goddess one referred to mortality. But of course the lyre-player has plucked me past college and all I could parlay out of the magnificent pictures of the Wallace Collection was a thrill.

But what a thrill such pictures can give! Art is the magnificence of humanity. It makes our endurance heroic. What is more wonderful about us than our ability to turn our suffering into our art?

Invisible orchestras played inaudible but heroic symphonies as I walked out of the Wallace Collection. The world appealed to me again. I called friends, shopped, dined, and got ready to return. Of course I couldn't get everything into those two mean little suitcases, so I got a nice big canvas bag for the excess. □

Photographed at Hope Plantation, Windsor, NC.



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The classic styling of 18th century furniture comes to the fore in Century's Claridge Collection. Fretwork, carved shells, and graceful Queen Anne legs are but a few of the design details which combine to give Claridge its richness and period authenticity. For our brochures send $5 to Century Furniture Company, P.O. Box 608, Dept. T-4, Hickory, NC 28603.

THE MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION THAT PRODUCED THE COFFEE FAVORED BY KINGS.

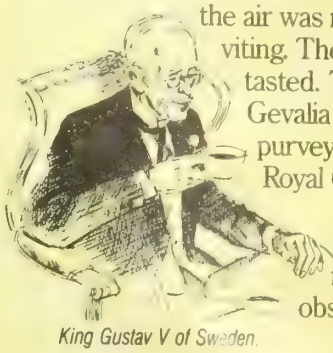


Over a century ago, in the small seaport town of Gävle, Sweden, a man was seized by an obsession... to produce the perfect coffee.

His search began in 1853, when Victor Theodor Engwall founded the company that still bears his name. He blended and roasted, tested and tasted with almost endless zeal. Although his fellow townsmen drank his coffee and found it superb, it never completely satisfied Victor Theodor Engwall. And when he handed the family business along to his sons, he also handed along the Engwall obsession. So down through the years the striving continued, to produce nothing less than the world's finest coffee.

A HAPPY ACCIDENT.

As the story is told, some years after this quest began, King Gustav V of Sweden, on a sailing excursion in the Baltic, stopped briefly at the port of Gävle. The sea breeze was chill. The aroma of Gevalia Kaffe in the air was most inviting. The King tasted. The King approved. And Gevalia was appointed coffee purveyor to His Majesty and the Royal Court of Sweden.



King Gustav V of Sweden.

However, even this triumph did not end the magnificent Engwall obsession. To this day this remarkable coffee is still made in Gävle, by people imbued with the Engwall ideal of perfection. It is Sweden's most beloved coffee. And generations of Swedish Kings have given it the Royal Seal.



Victor Th. Engwall

WHY THIS NOBLE FLAVOR MAY BE SURPRISINGLY FAMILIAR.

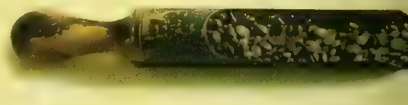
When you first taste Gevalia® Kaffe, you may be surprised to feel almost a sense of recognition ...a *déjà vu.* Not that it's likely you've ever tasted coffee this good before. But this is the way you've always wanted coffee to taste. Rich. Full-bodied. As good in the cup as fine coffee smells at the moment of grinding.

Many have sought to discover how this special taste is achieved. What gives Gevalia its high flavor notes, lively piquancy, delicate nuances. Its body and depth, without bitterness.

There is no simple answer, and little purpose in trying to fathom why this coffee is so agreeable. It is enough simply to enjoy the pleasure of Gevalia's company with breakfast, lunch and dinner. To share it with friends. To linger over in moments of solitude.

COMES REGULAR—OR DECAFFEINATE BY A PATENTED EUROPEAN PROCESS.

This exceptional coffee is available now in the U.S. in regular or decaffeinated. Our patented decaffeination method is remarkably simple yet took years to develop. The same



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If reply form is missing, for full details please write to Gevalia Kaffe Import Service, Dept. W, P.O. Box 5045, Clifton, N.J. 07015.



Decaffeinated, whole bean.

Regular, whole bean.

Regular, ground.

Decaffeinated, ground.

substance that creates the effervescent action in sparkling water is applied to the coffee beans at a certain temperature and pressure. Like a magnet, it draws out the caffeine, while the full coffee flavor and characteristic richness of Gevalia® Kaffe remain.

Gevalia Kaffe also offers a line of extra rich dark roasts and espresso coffees for the most discriminating of tastes.

ORDER IT WHOLE BEAN OR GROUND.

Gevalia Kaffe is a whole bean coffee which we offer to grind for you if you prefer. Each batch is roasted under the careful supervision of a Gevalia master roaster. Then, whether whole bean or ground, it is quickly vacuum sealed in special golden foil pouches. The better to preserve its freshness as you use it, Gevalia Kaffe comes in the half-pound size only.



Whole bean.



Ground, if you prefer.

NOW YOU'RE INVITED TO TRY GEVALIA THROUGH A SPECIAL IMPORT SERVICE.



Until recently, Gevalia Kaffe has never been exported to the U.S. It probably never will be sold here in the usual manner. For beans of the quality in Gevalia are not available in quantities large enough to supply a mass market. And for many, its price puts Gevalia out of reach.



The only way to obtain a trial supply of Gevalia Kaffe is by ordering it directly from the Gevalia Kaffe Import Service. If the coffee lives up to your expectations, the Service will replenish your supply on a regular basis with no need of further instruction from you. There is, of course, no obligation to continue the arrangement. The decision rests with you.



A REGAL BRIBE.

To further assure that Gevalia Kaffe is kept at its best until it is consumed, a special canister has been designed in which to store each half-pound pouch after it is opened. This imported canister has an ingenious closure device to lock in freshness by creating an air-tight seal. Of white ceramic, the canister is embossed in gold with the Royal Crest of Sweden. It can be yours as a gift with the purchase of Gevalia Kaffe. This gift (retail value, $18.00) is intended, of course, to induce you to try Gevalia Kaffe soon. Once a few people do, we expect word of mouth will do the rest.



To send for Gevalia Kaffe, please read the details of this offer in the attached order form; fill out and mail it today. For your convenience, it folds and seals to become a pre-addressed envelope.

By Appointment to His Majesty the King of Sweden.

GEVALIA
KAFFE

WHEN POSITION IS EVERYTHING

Using the ancient Chinese art of *feng shui* to make interiors more auspicious

By Sarah Rossbach

In 1977, while working in Hong Kong, I began Chinese lessons with a man known as Dr. Lin Yun. He was friendly, portly, and looked like a Chinese version of Buddy Hackett, tending toward a sartorial taste in Hawaiian shirts, black slacks, and slightly elevated shoes. But rumors flew about that colony of his prowess in an ancient art called *feng shui*. I had heard of this ancient art but had only a vague notion of what it was. Soon enough, however, I had opportunity to learn more, because our classes were regularly disrupted by the frantic appearance of a desperate believer who had tracked down Lin Yun and wouldn't leave until his cause—rocky marriage, failing business, poor health—was attended to. So, as if on cue, we'd close our textbook and Lin Yun would invite me to join him on what perhaps could be called *feng shui* field trips.

It turned out this age-old science was very mystical and very pragmatic; it had ancient agrarian origins but was used today for the most sophisticated of environments. Thousands of years ago in early Chinese culture, farmers sought harmony with the vast and animistic nature thought to be both creative and destructive. Earth was considered a "living, breathing organism" (Eitel) and mountains and rivers as dragons who inhaled and exhaled a vital, life-enhancing energy, *ch'i*. To survive and prosper, the Chinese called on shamans, who, like architectural dowsers, sought *ch'i* to discern the most harmonious and auspicious place to site a city, build a house, a temple, or a grave. *Feng shui* evolved as a mix of Taoism, Buddhism, and yin-yang theory of balance and oneness with nature, common sense, superstition, and, sometimes, but not always, good taste. Its tools ranged from intricate cosmic compasses, to building and furniture placement, to the *I Ching*. Added to this was a dash of intuition, imagination, and interpretation of omens from the environment. Correctly harnessed, *ch'i* can bestow the goods: happy marriage, family, long life, wealth, and a successful career.



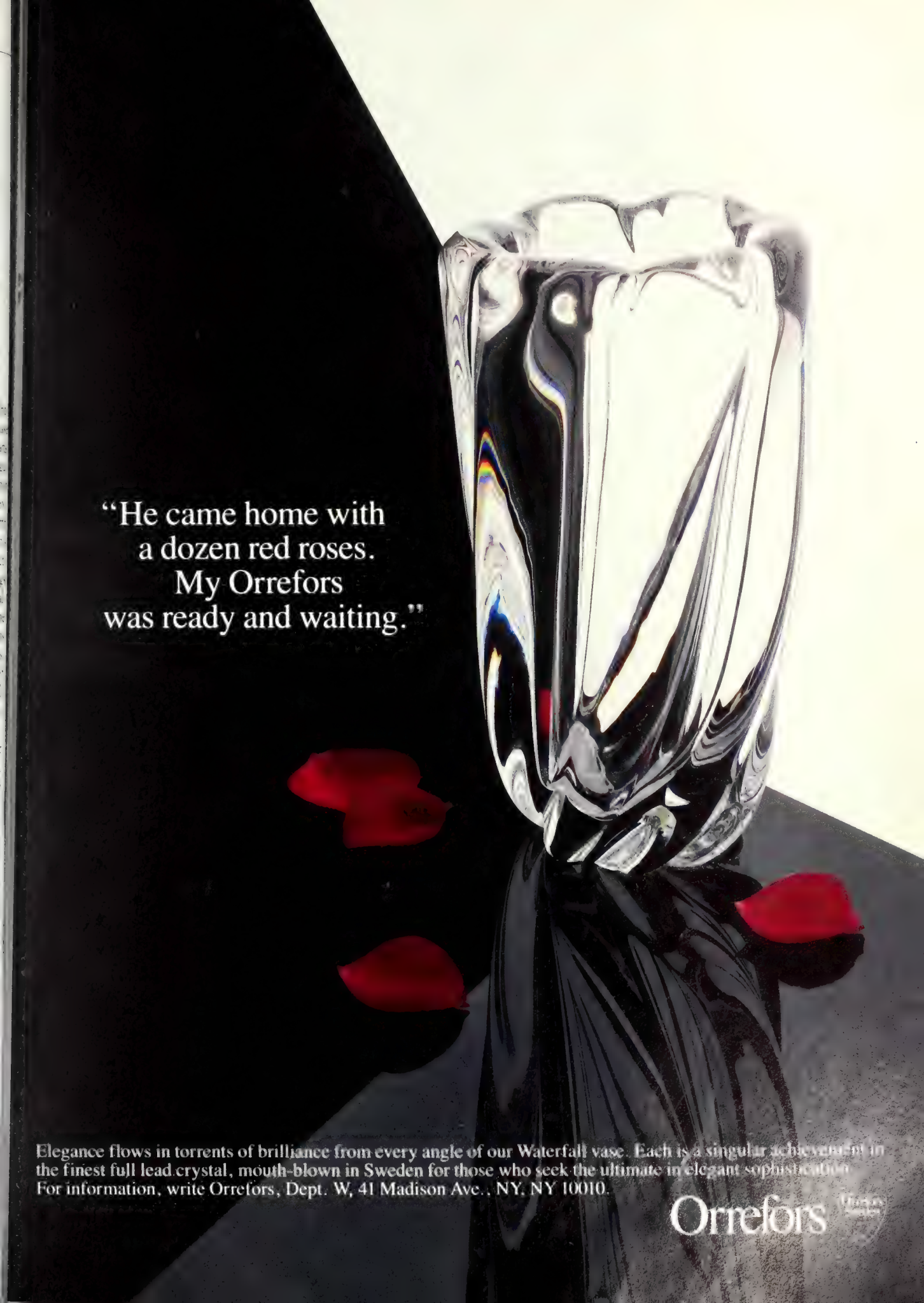
Feng shui is one way of achieving what the characters of *I Ching, above,* state: possession in great measure; supreme success.

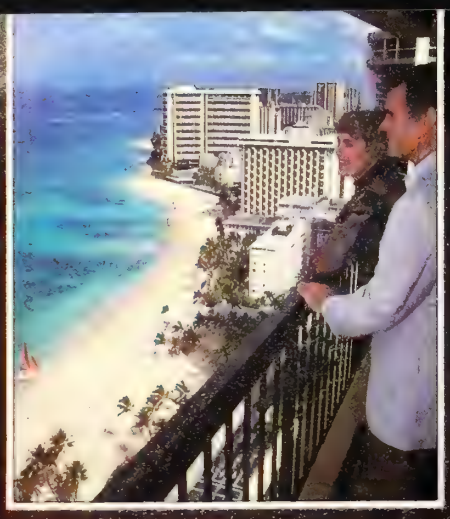
According to Lin Yun, modern-day home builders, decorators, restaurateurs, and such mighty internationals as Chase Manhattan and Citibank in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan are not beyond calling on experts of this ancient earth science for help. "Man's *ch'i* is altered and affected by his surroundings and whether they are balanced and aligned. So the shapes of beds, the forms and heights of buildings, and the directions of roads and corners all modify a person's character and destiny."

A couple of years after I returned from Asia, Dr. Lin called to say he was staying in the Bay Area and lecturing on *feng shui* at Stanford and Berkeley. He had addressed The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and he was planning to lecture at MIT, but would stop in New York to see a floundering Dosanko restaurant in the South Street Seaport. He hinted he was curious about some other restaurants in New York. And so it was one gray day in November we found ourselves on yet another field trip. This one to some well-known Manhattan watering holes.

His latest *feng shui* assignment, Auntie Yuan, was our first stop. At the appointed time, he jumped out of one of three Lincoln Continentals; the other two soon disgorged at least twenty followers and admirers—Chinese restaurateurs and their wives, a United Nations employee, Lin Yun's dental-student nephews, a Taiwanese businessman, and *(Continued on page 74)*

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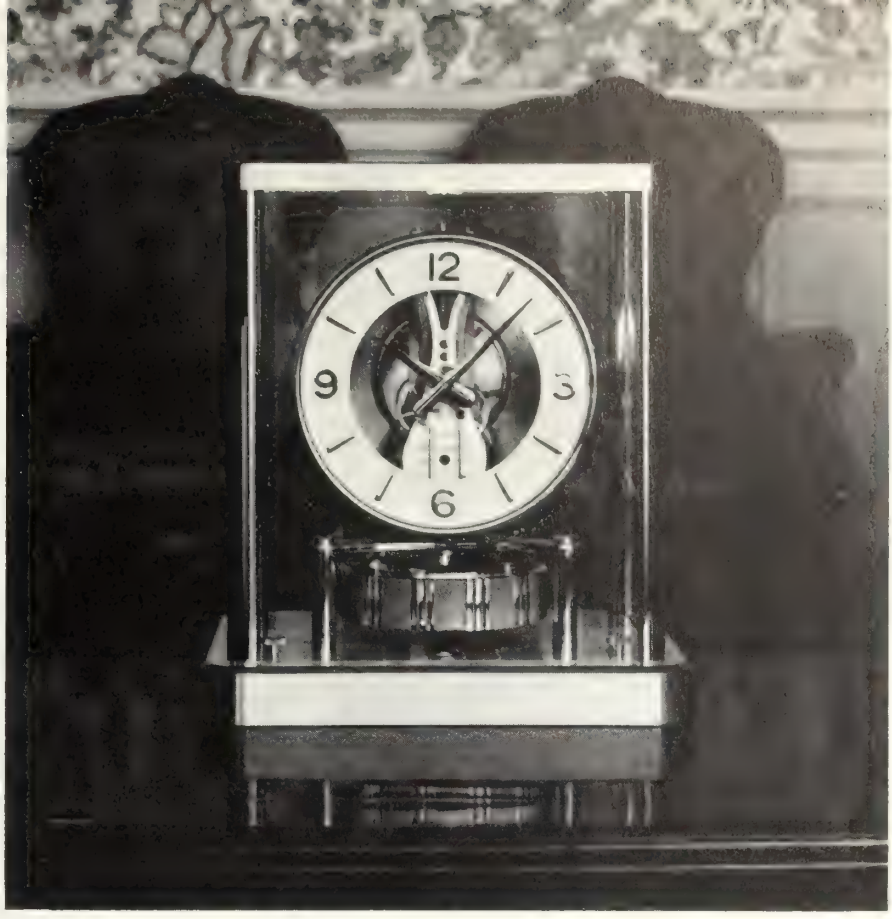
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(Continued from page 70) an accountant from San Francisco.

As this small and noisy throng stood in the not-too-large bar area of Auntie Yuan, he proudly pointed out mirrors above the bar and behind the wine rack that he said created the illusion of twice as many bottles and would double the amount of liquor sold. Mirrors are the aspirin of *feng shui:* besides doubling luck, when correctly placed, they can balance *ch'i,* deflect knifelike corners that aim threateningly at occupants, draw in such positive forces as water, scenery, and money, create the illusion of space in cramped quarters and reflect all intruders to anyone whose back is to the door.

As we filed behind him into the kitchen, Lin Yun said that the location of the chef's station is an important consideration in any restaurant. "A kitchen represents wealth," he said. The Chinese word for food (*ts'ai*) sounds the same as their word for wealth. Here, he added, the kitchen is in the "fame" position, one of eight areas into which a room, office, or house can be divided according to the mystical *I Ching* octagon; thus its food is assured good publicity.

After bowing greetings to Mrs. Yuan, the chef, Dr. Lin pulled me aside. He said that because food/money is in the hands of traditionally temperamental Chinese chefs, the stove, above all, must be sited with great care. "Twelve hours of standing in front of a hot wok will affect any cook's *ch'i,* making her or him hot-tempered," he explained. "But as an old saying goes, 'A good chef is rarer than a sage,' I try to make them comfortable."

The aluminum wall behind the stove, he said, acted as a mirror, allowing the chef to be aware of all who entered. Naturally if the chef is surprised, a nervous chain reaction is set off, affecting everything—the food at hand as well as the waiter's attitude and finally the customers' satisfaction. Tapping a wind chime hung behind the chef's back, Dr. Lin said its ring would mystically wake up her subconscious and draw publicity to the food. Wind chimes also redirect and disperse strong *ch'i.* A light above the chef would both put the restaurant in the spotlight and improve its dishes and income.

As he headed toward the cloakroom, Lin Yun said a cash register's position is most important for any business because if properly placed it attracts money. "In ordinary restaurants, a cash register is in full view so it can absorb the guests' money, but here, because First Avenue's *ch'i* is reckless and dangerous, it is hidden in the coatcheck area." For added security, a vase with a red ribbon wrapped around it, symbolizing peace, sits next to the register and a bamboo flute, also with a red ribbon, hangs to the side. The flute, according to Lin Yun, acts as a sword protecting profits and patrons and as a funnel, "conducting *ch'i* section by section, making business better and better."



New York's Auntie Yuan used black on the walls—the color that "traditionally symbolizes and draws in money."

Other decorating touches, he said, also served mystical functions. The black walls, for instance, have their own meaning. According to an arcane designation that divides *ch'i* into five elements—earth, fire, water, gold, and wood—black is a manifestation of water, which traditionally symbolizes and draws in money. "Black brings wealth to the restaurant," he explained. Gesturing proudly toward the elegant framed calligraphy scrolls of "Tao" or such sayings as, "When old friends meet despite great storm, there is true friendship," Lin Yun said, "I painted these with old Chinese sayings, but behind each character is a chant for good luck." And pointing to the bright, diagonally cast spotlights that crisscross the restaurant like still, miniature searchlights aimed at small flowers in glossy black vases on the tables, he said, "They are like many suns bringing up both the *ch'i* of diners and the luck of the restaurant."

Whether *feng shui* was ever used in Imperial banquet halls, tea houses, or floating restaurants where sing-song girls entertained between courses is unclear. According to Dr. Lin, in the United States, restaurateurs are his most frequent clients. One of them, Johnny Kao, owner of Mr. K's in Washington, D.C., told me he credits fifty percent of his success to *feng shui.* But Lin Yun said he was curious to see what Western restaurants did to attract business. So our next stop was Le Cirque, a three-star restaurant, known as much for its good French food as for being a favorite of Richard Nixon, Mrs. Bloomingdale, and the President and Mrs. Reagan, among others. Even as we had passed by the healthy green plants outside its 65th Street entrance, Lin Yun said, "These show the area's earth *ch'i* is very lively and good." Once inside, he waxed ecstatic about the mirrors on either side of the entrance foyer for giving depth to a normally constrained space, and about the four small trees in each corner for attracting *ch'i.* Then, pointing to a mirror above the ceiling light, Dr. Lin commented, "Although they haven't studied it, they have created 'good' *feng shui* and so the restaurant is very famous."

He liked the lighting, and the *ch'i*-activating flower arrangements—plants, both real and fake, evoke nature in miniature, create *ch'i* and allow it to rise and circulate and shield rooms from the edges of sharp corners. He approved of the bar position on the cusp of "moneymaking" and "family"—meaning tranquility—positions. He said, however, the dining area had several potential *feng shui* problems. Most notable were the *ch'i*-obstructing columns and the seat of the money keeper, which faces away from the Mayfair Regent *(Continued on page 76)*

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(Continued from page 74) entrance. A decorator has partially solved these problems by putting mirrors on the columns, but he neglected to cover the "knifelike" corners that point at tables. Lin Yun suggested "adding vines or flowers to soften the edges." One mirror facing the money keeper solves the positioning problems by creating an Annie Oakley–style vantage point for viewing all who enter from the hotel.

The spacious kitchen particularly impressed Lin Yun. At five minutes before noon, it was a sea of calm. This, he said, coupled with chef Alan Sailhac's "smooth *ch'i,*" made the waiters and cooks agreeable. Peering into the small pastry room, Lin Yun said it was in the "moneymaking" section of the kitchen, meaning profits would be sweet.

Next we decided to head uptown to Elaine's, renowned for its bad food and famous faces.

As waiters ran by us, Lin Yun said Elaine's two shortcomings were the narrow area outside the kitchen, bottling up traffic and *ch'i,* and the closeness of the kitchen to the toilets. The latter problem could be fixed, he suggested, by hanging either a wind chime, a flute, a mirrored ball, or a half-length beaded curtain between the two areas to redirect the kitchen's *ch'i.* Otherwise, he warned, though money may enter the restaurant, in the end, "the profits will get flushed out." When asked about a similar setup at Auntie Yuan, he said it was corrected simply because he had personally blessed the area.

The fake grapes, hanging down from the archway between the bar and the main dining area distribute, like wind chimes, strong *ch'i* that otherwise might flow too swiftly, harming business and making patrons uncomfortable. Walking into the side room, he praised the mural of Venice: painted vistas of sky—meaning horizons—and water—meaning money. He said, "Because it is sited in the 'career' and 'knowledge' side of the room, the mural ensures the owners will have knowledge to broaden business to appeal to a large variety of customers."

Pointing to the mirrors on the opposite wall, he said, "Elaine had good intuition on improving the *ch'i,* because the mirrors both reflected the mural and created *(Continued on page 80)*


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AT THE TABLE

(Continued from page 76) greater sense of depth. They were all the right size, extending from the height of a sitting person to that of one standing. "If they were shorter, they might cut off patrons' heads creating an uncomfortable feeling." Peering into the busy kitchen, Dr. Lin noted that the light was good, but that *ch'i* would be enlivened if the white divider were painted a vibrant green.

"Brighter isn't always better," he added. "At Elaine's the darker atmosphere makes the mood mellow and relaxing."

At Café Luxembourg, the scene was not as calm. Lin Yun led me into the small kitchen. He said it was out of proportion and unbalanced in comparison to the large dining area. Remarking on chef Patrick Clark's amazing calm amid the bustle, Lin Yun said the kitchen's bad *feng shui* would make him irritable in a matter of months. He also warned against the slanted kitchen door—slanting structures forbode oblique, unexpected accidents.

As he was explaining that both these problems could be remedied by the simple expedient of hanging a wind chime on the kitchen side of the door, thus "adjusting the balance," a couple of Chinese waiters approached, fascinated by his *feng shui* assessments. "You mean our boss hired you?" they asked, in disbelief at the owner's possible awareness of the ways of the East. Dr. Lin giggled a denial but indicated that the restaurant's success could be traced to the wide and mirrored bar—which was packed even at 5:30 P.M. He shook his head, "How do they all know to use mirrors?" If plants, red flowers, or aquariums (containers of water draw in money) were installed, he said, profits would multiply.

The biggest shortcoming, he said, however, is the position of the toilets in the fame side of the octagon, meaning that "although the café may get a lot of publicity, it may be sullied with a bad reputation for being, say, too haughty or too harried."

Meanwhile, back at the South Street Seaport Dosanko—with half of its *feng shui* alterations complete—a partner said, "Since we added a plant, a flute, and wind chimes, business has improved noticeably. But, it's only been two weeks. Time, and a mirror, will tell." □


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A LIVING LANDMARK

At 95, Truus Schröder-Schräder is still very much the mistress of the revolutionary modern house Gerrit Rietveld built for her in 1924

By Martin Filler



Gerrit Rietveld's original rendering of the Schröder house interior, 1924. *Top:* Rietveld and Truus Schröder-Schräder during the thirties.

Prinshendriklaan in Utrecht is much like any other upper-middle-class residential street in Holland, lined with substantial red-brick row houses that bespeak the solid values of their builders. Near the city center those structures are floridly ornate, but as one moves toward the edge of town the architecture becomes increasingly simpler, the scale smaller, the mood closer to the dull sameness of the typical Dutch suburb. Then suddenly on the left is a house that never fails to startle on first sight. Here among the foresquare symbols of the benevolent burgher life is an artifact of stunning surprise: it is the Schröder house, the seminal modern landmark built by Gerrit Rietveld in 1924 and ever since numbered among the enduring touchstones of twentieth-century art.

To the architectural pilgrim—and there are thousands of them each year—the Schröder house inevitably seems smaller than imagined, a result of its lack of the familiar scale references that we are used to in conventional houses. Rather than the monolith of our received notions, the Schröder house strikes the first-time viewer as more a large piece of cabinetry than a full-size work of architecture. (Rietveld, in fact, had started out as a furniture maker, and the intricate volumetric conception of this building speaks clearly of his professional origins.) To the unsuspecting passer-by, the Schröder house is even more astonishing: though six decades old this year, it still seems thoroughly futuristic, so modern that even a layman would agree that architecture as a whole has never quite caught up with it. But more amazing yet is that this acknowledged masterpiece of Modernism is still inhabited by the remarkable woman for whom it was built.

Far more than merely the patron of a world-famous house, Truus Schröder-Schräder can now be seen in the perspective of time as a close partner in the creation of one of the most inventive interior designs of this century. Though both she and her family to this day maintain a circumspect silence about her long personal relationship with Gerrit *(Continued on page 87)*

MARJAN SCHRODER


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Continued from page 82) Rietveld, it is nonetheless certain that she and the Dutch architect will be accorded a paired place in the annals of design equivalent to that of Le Corbusier and the furniture designer Charlotte Perriand, or Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and the interior designer Lilly Reich: that is, a collaboration that became a rare synthesis of talent, wherein the efforts of each are truly inseparable.

This August 23, Truus Schröder-Schräder celebrates her 95th birthday. Though the last few months have been difficult ones for her as she recuperates from a painful broken hip, she is able to look back on her extraordinary life as a pioneer of the modern design sensibility with exceptional clarity and insight. She makes the revolutionary fervor of early Dutch Modernism seem not a historic movement, but rather a contemporary development.

At a time when current architecture is obsessed with the pre-modern past, Mrs. Schröder is able to summon up the mood of the moment when the epochal break with centuries of precedent occurred. "I had not much respect for the past," she recalls of her attitude as a teen-ager in the first years of the new century. "Modern things had my love. When I saw other girls my age walking by I often thought to myself, 'Are they like me, discontent with everything that is accepted?' " Most weren't, of course, and the young Truus Schräder found few kindred spirits in Arnhem or Leiden, where she grew up as the younger daughter of a textile merchant. Although her older sister had been allowed to attend university, she herself was not, even though she had a deep desire to study architecture. Truus's marriage to Frits Schröder, a lawyer, in 1911 produced three children but not the sense of being in tune with the new times she felt were demanding her involvement.



MICHAEL KOOREN

Sixty years later, the house still startles

Truus Schröder-Schräder—her maiden and married names were hyphenated in the Dutch practice—met Gerrit Rietveld, who was a year older than she, around 1918, when he came to the Schröders' house in Utrecht with his father to restore an antique desk. They immediately appreciated one another as forward-thinking and impatient with the status quo. That attitude was made inescapably clear in the revolutionary chair designed by Rietveld in 1917: the Red and Blue chair, as it came to be known, was the first great artifact of the De Stijl movement, the group of likeminded Dutch artists, architects, and graphic designers who banded together in 1917 to promote a new modern aesthetic by which they hoped to raise the world from the physical destruction and psychic degradation loosed by the First World War. Their outlook was uncompromisingly messianic, and it gave a new shared center to the lives of Gerrit Rietveld and Truus Schröder-Schräder.

In 1923, when he learned that he was terminally ill, Frits Schröder encouraged his wife to think about building a new house that would serve her and their children more sympathetically than the conventional house they had lived in during their marriage. Not surprisingly, for the design of that new home she turned to Gerrit Rietveld, who thereupon embarked on the most significant commission of his career and produced one of the genuine masterpieces of modern architecture. The site that had been selected for the new house was conducive to experimentation: at the far end of a row of attached houses, the plot was at the very edge of Utrecht and faced a broad, open field.

Rietveld's scheme was characteristic of many other great works of art, being both brilliantly complex and essentially simple at the same time. The plan, a basic rectangle, provided for service functions and extra bedrooms on the ground floor, with the main living areas, master bedroom, and kitchen on the main floor above (a format also shared by the contemporary villas of Le Corbusier, among others.) This was the first great convertible interior in modern Western architecture, made possible by *(Continued on page 88)*



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(Continued from page 87) the ingenious system of sliding and folding walls that Rietveld provided at Truus Schröder-Schräder's insistence, her most important contribution to their joint effort. "He would compromise more easily than she would," Marjan Schröder, the client's daughter, recently recalled. "He didn't like to compromise, but she didn't like it either. Her influence was very strong. She couldn't do the technical side, so she could be very persistent in insisting, 'You *have* to find a way to do it.' And he always would."

The design process was an event of extreme intensity for the two, and the realization of his scheme brought Truus Schröder-Schräder to a state of near rapture, which she transmits in the retelling even now. "We were so very, very happy because it was so beautiful," she recounts. "While they were building it, the children and I went up onto the roof to look at it and I remember saying to them, 'Can you really believe that this will be our house?' and they could not, because it was too beautiful."

That feeling was not shared by many of their fellow townspeople, however, who saw the Schröder house as a bizarre eyesore rather than the brave emblem of a new artistic order. The Schröder children were taunted by schoolmates for living in such a strange abode, and many of them were forbidden by their parents to play with the young neighbors who lived in the local *wangerdrocht* (monstrosity). Despite the oddity of the exterior, the interiors of the Schröder house in due course confirmed the wisdom of Truus Schröder-Schräder's foresight. Although her intention for wanting the mobile wall panels was to be able to reorganize the interior spaces after her children left home, during World War II the movable partitions and well-thought-out plumbing made it possible to accommodate them once again, this time as independent young adults, with welcome privacy and relative ease.

The years of the Nazi occupation brought an abrupt end to Rietveld's always-small architectural practice, but he continued to design furniture, and he patriotically applied his artistic talents to the underground resistance effort by forging identity cards, passports, and ration books. Though neglected and increasingly obscure in comparison to the more prolific masters of Modernism such as Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, Rietveld was "rediscovered" in the late fifties, and won several important building commissions before his death twenty years ago at the age of 75.

Since then, Truus Schröder-Schräder has witnessed the further flowering of Rietveld's reputation, a fact that she could not have missed as the occupant of his most famous architectural work. Over the past two decades, the stream of visitors—most of them uninvited, an increasing problem as the owner moves on into advanced old age—has grown to torrential proportions. But despite the daily trials of inhabiting a house that the architectural enthusiasts of the world believe (with some justification) to be part of common cultural ownership, there is a large measure of pride in Truus Schröder-Schräder having lived long enough to witness her house transformed from home to art-historical heirloom. "I knew quite well that I was working on a revolution," she admits sixty years after the fact, but also disclaims the self-consciousness of the act that other vanguard figures have tried to attach retroactively to their contributions. "I think that is so *belachelijk,*" she says quite firmly, putting a deliberate emphasis on the Dutch word for "ludicrous."

As Truus Schröder-Schräder enters the homestretch to her centenary, her house remains as surprising as ever. Although the rooms are in exceptionally good repair for their age, they lack the seamless perfection and high degree of surface finish one imagines the cerebral artifacts of the De Stijl movement to have had. Far less abstract and machinelike than they seem in the precise and pristine renderings of Rietveld, the interiors possess a thoroughly homey feeling that makes a pot of yellow begonias, or a stack of exhibition catalogues, or a snapshot of the architect pinned against a deep-blue wall seem perfectly sympathetic additions. They, as much as this house, are reminders of the deeply humanizing aspect of early Modernism that has been forgotten in recent times. It is that quality above all that the living spirit of one of its most important surviving pioneers helps us to remember, vividly. □



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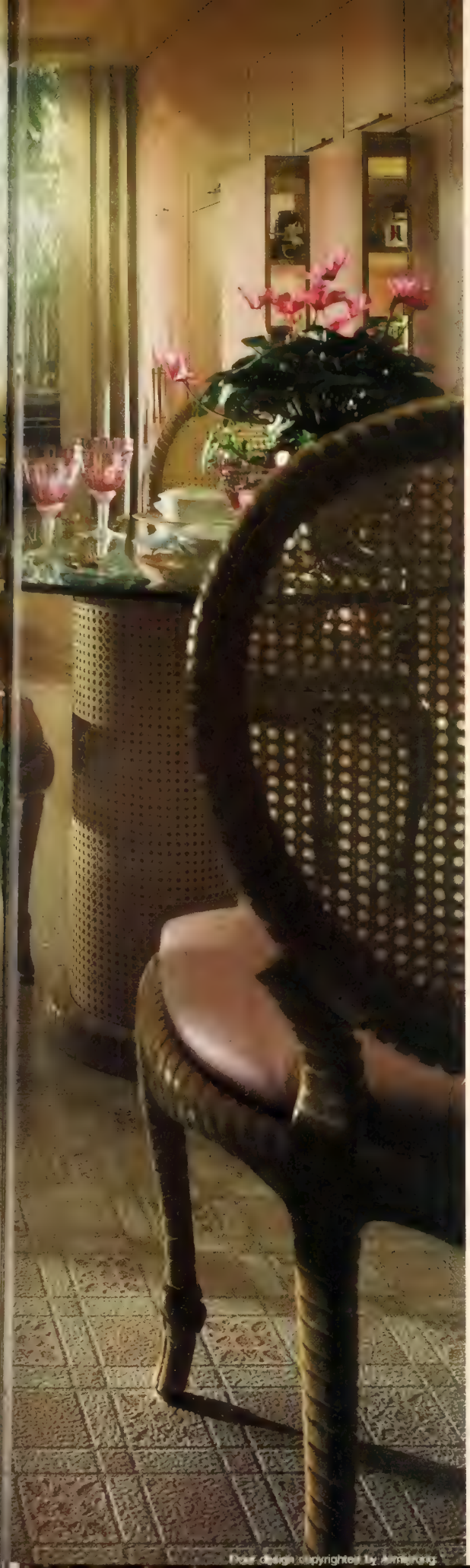


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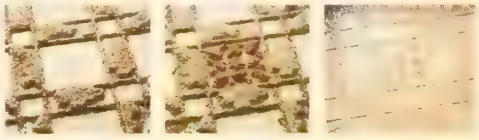
The kitchen itself is a model of efficiency with an ingenious storage wall that includes the refrigerator and freezer as well as pull-out sections for small appliances. An added convenience is the microwave oven on a cart that can be stored out of sight or rolled to the table for easy serving.

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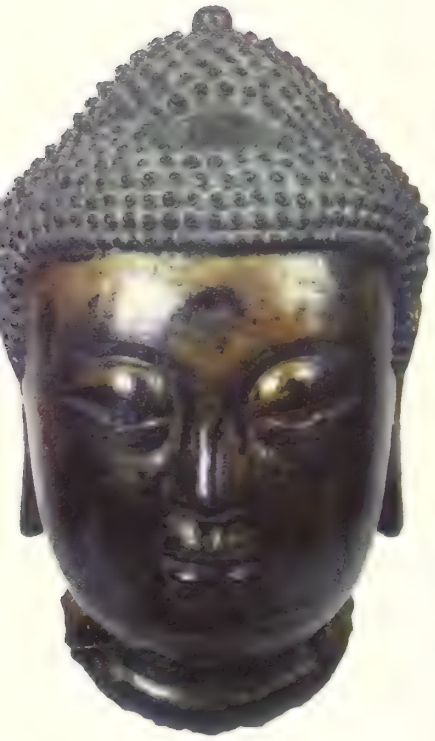


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ALL ABOUT STYLE

By Nancy Richardson



Bronze head of Buddha, Ming dynasty, at Ariane Dandois

■ PARIS ANTIQUES The biggest and the nicest antiques show in the world occurs every other year in Paris. The Biennale des Antiquaires—September 20–October 7—is held at the Grand Palais, the enormous Beaux-Arts exhibition space on the Right Bank. For glamour, it beats any other location for a fair. The association of eighteenth-century dealers who dominate the three weeks are called Les Antiquaires de Paris and they are the major international source, other than the auction houses, for important French eighteenth-century and early-nineteenth-century furniture and decorations. Their stand is a little building containing eight different galleries, each with a different emphasis. Didier Aaron will present handsome, boldly scaled eighteenth-century furniture along with paintings by Hubert Robert. Maurice Segoura always produces a major piece that has to be bought by the French government because the authorities will not let it out of the country. Someone of the eight, which also includes Jacques Perrin, Michel Meyer, Galerie Camoin, Étienne Lévy, and the Don Juan of the group, Aveline's Jean-Marie Rossi, will be selling a piece from a Rothschild collection. Any one of them with something that belonged to Marie Antoinette will hope to sell it to Baronne Liliane de Rothschild, who has long collected such things. Bernard Steinitz, the newest member of the association, has an eye for high-style decorative furniture like the table, *right*. The rest of the fair is about European seventeenth-, eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century furniture, objects, paintings, stamps, medals, rare books and documents. Worth a special look are two dealers in Oriental art—Gisèle Cröes from Brussels and Ariane Dandois Faye in Paris—soon to open shop with Philip Farley in New York—who will offer the rare Buddhist head, *left*. ■ LADY AMATEUR A lady dealer with an antiques shop is a different breed than a real antiques dealer. What the amateur has to offer usually is an insight to fashionable decoration. She starts out arranging her own houses, learns as she goes, feels her eye is as good as many of her decorator friends, falls in love with one or another unrecognized moments in the history of furniture, finds an affordable level in it, gives out of space even in her own basement, launches a shop and sometimes a style. At the moment some fashionable taste has turned from a well-edited simplicity to a well-edited clutter. Most of the furniture this clutter relies on was made in the nineteenth century. Experimenting with it are such dealer-amateurs as Frances Scaife, *left*, at the Tail End in Ligonier, Pennsylvania, which offers animal pictures, textiles, old wicker, *right*. ■ ROCOCO IN ENGLAND Voltaire called eighteenth-century France the whipped cream of Europe and summed up all that the English are supposed to dislike about the French. Fluff or not, some of the most interesting moments in English taste have come when English things got Frenchified. There was a moment at the end of the seventeenth century



Jacob console at Steinitz



Frances Scaife in Ligonier



Wicker at the Tail End

RICHARD DAVIES



In 1902, Karen Gardner thought the garden provided the ideal place to sneak a cigarette.



Unfortunately, her idea was nipped in the bud.

VIRGINIA SLIMS



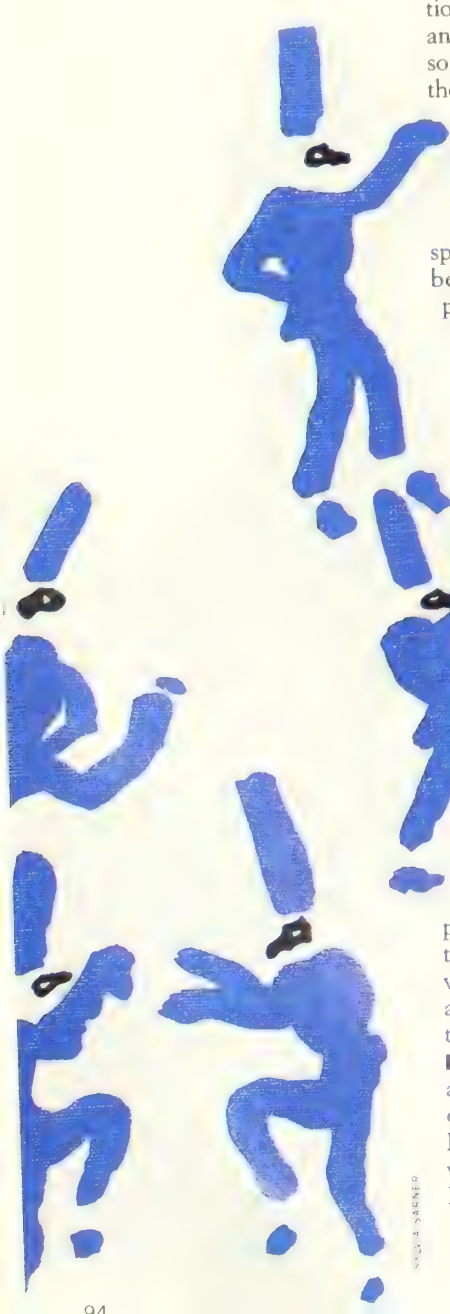
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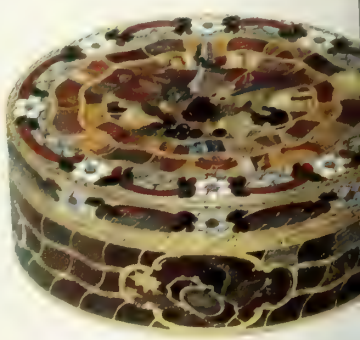
David Hockney clown material

when a number of Versailles-like stone piles went up around England. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the Prince of Wales shopped enthusiastically for French court furniture along with his friend the Marquess of Hertford and others. When it became unpatriotic to like French design during the time of Napoleon, the Regent's taste was diverted to the Oriental fantasies he and John Nash devised for the Brighton Pavilion. Fifteen years later, however, the Duke of Wellington was decorating the Waterloo Gallery at Apsley House in a flamboyant French manner. It is somehow not so surprising that the English would respond to Louis XIV's baroque classicism or to the elegant, restrained Neoclassicism which began at the time of Louis XVI. But what is improbable in terms of what we think of as the Englishness of English taste is the period from 1730–1760, when the English appropriated all the infectious pleasure, the frivolity, lightheartedness and asymmetry of the French Rococo—sometimes even outfancifying the French themselves. So suppressed was even the memory of the period that as recently as 1933 John Betjeman wrote that there had been no Rococo in England.

But it has always been the special talent of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London to jar public perceptions. In its current exhibition—"Rococo, Art and Design in Hogarth's England"—until September 30—this neglected period comes to life with quantities of furniture by Channon, Linnell, and Chippendale, engravings by Gravelot, paintings by Canaletto, Hogarth, and Hayman, sculpture by Roubiliac, *above,* silver by Lamerie and Meissonier. This exhibition is made up of material from 120 sources including 22 country houses which have lent things made for them in the period. There is a generous number of objects from American museums. ■ BARON THYSSEN'S TREASURE Baron Hans Heinrich von Thyssen-Bornemisza is perhaps the premier private collector in the world. The American part of his life includes being a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum and a director at Sotheby's. Besides his collection of old master paintings seen in 1980 at the National Gallery in Washington and his twentieth-century pictures shown last year at the Metropolitan and collections of bronzes, ivories, silver, and furniture, the Baron has completed over the last 25 years a collection of gold boxes, *objets de vertu,* and Renaissance jewels. From September 20–30 the public is invited to Sotheby's in New York to see this Thyssen treasury, which includes the German hardstone box, *right.* There will be a complete catalogue (Vendome) with some good essays and lots of color plates. The Baron's museum in Lugano is open to the public every summer. Last day this year: October 15. ■ DAVID HOCKNEY FABRIC Such is the separation between art and decoration today that it is virtually impossible to get a famous contemporary painter to make a design for an upholstery fabric. But friendship sometimes provides a wonderful back door, which was the case when David Hockney did a clean, cotton design, *left,* Punchinella, for Celia Birtwell, London; tel.: 221.0877. □



Terra-cotta model of a statue of Handel by Roubiliac



One of Baron Thyssen's hardstone boxes

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THE JEWELS OF BOND STREET

By John Bowes-Lyon



An abundance of antique rings and necklaces, Georgian silver in cases at S.J. Phillips Ltd.

Opposite Sotheby's on New Bond Street, the discrete entrance to S. J. Phillips Ltd. is to be found. "Silversmith, jewels, antique plate, bijouterie," proclaims the stationery—but it is something of an understatement, for in reality one is about to enter an Ali Baba's cave. It is not only the venerable atmosphere that distinguishes this shop but also the terrific assortment of treasures—many unique—which make up the stock. It is the world of the Edwardian era—of beautiful tiaras, parures of emeralds and amethysts, walking sticks with jeweled handles, old English and Continental silver, ruby and diamond studs and cuff links and superb jewelry—even a peer's coronet or two.

Many of the major collectors of the past fifty years have been customers of S. J. Phillips. Pierpont Morgan and William Randolph Hearst were among their earlier clients; Judge Untermyer bought a large part of his collection of silver and objects of art from them, and much of Mrs. Harvey Firestone's silver and collection of gold boxes came from the shop. The late Arturo Lopez-Willshaw was a somewhat different type of collector; he bought anything that caught his eye—silver, furniture, gold boxes, Renaissance objects and jewelry. He also bought presents for all his friends, which used to fascinate managing director Martin Norton, who was used to collectors, however rich, spending all their money on themselves.

What distinguishes S. J. Phillips from other jewelry businesses is not only that everything is of the finest quality—although often not enormously expensive—but that their stock is made up of the whole spectrum of European jewelry—from rare Renaissance pieces to gold cuff links made in 1984.

If you want to buy a diamond flower spray made around 1750, or some French steel jewelry, popular in the early nineteenth century—or again, a gold bracelet set with scarabs and made by Castellani—or an enamel and diamond powder compact made in the twenties by Cartier—they have it. The shop handled the sale to the British Museum of a pair of eighteenth-century gold ice pails that once belonged to the Earl of Spencer.

Martin Norton, who runs the family business which was founded in 1869, is the third generation to do so—his mother was a Phillips—and he is helped by his sons, Nicolas and Jonathan, and his nephew Francis. Mr. Norton has been on Bond Street since he left school in 1929, having learned his basic knowledge first at The Central School of Arts and Crafts and then at the Courtauld Institute. His sons and nephew all received similar apprenticeships before joining the business—and by attending sales all over the world, they keep up-to-date with current auction prices.

Beyond the showcases of the entrance galleries is a second room—an inner sanctum—where the most important items are displayed on tables and around the walls in vitrines. Mr. Norton is usually to be found seated here at the center table, taking a telephone call or consulting with his sons on the pricing of an object.

Clients old and new receive the same courteous treatment and the benefit of Mr. Norton's extensive knowledge. Friends, and dealers from abroad who are in London for a particular auction, look forward to an invitation to luncheon in the small downstairs dining room where good food, wine, and conversation abound.

Among the most important treasures that S. J. Phillips has handled is the Savernake Horn—a thirteenth-century medieval work of art which was recently sold *(Continued on page 98)*

CHRISTOPHER SYKES



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(Continued from page 96) to the British Museum. The firm was able to buy about two thirds of the Russian Crown Jewels when they were sold at Christie's, including diamonds originally worn by Catherine the Great. Recently they bought a ruby and diamond necklace which Napoleon gave to his second wife, Empress Marie-Louise—it was made in 1811 by Nitot, and the diamonds had once belonged to Louis XVI. Then in 1816, it was remounted by Bapst for the Duchess of Angoulême. Curiously, this information is only now known because a few months ago Mr. Norton happened upon the inventory of the French crown jewels for the years 1811–12.

Many of the important gold boxes sold by S. J. Phillips have actually been handled by them three or four times before—a kind of recycling. Mr. Norton is of the opinion that people tend to buy expensive things late in their lives but unless their children like them, they usually get sold again when the collector dies. People who pay ten thousand pounds and upward for one gold box are not hard up for money, and in most countries where there is a doubt about the currency such objects tend to be a good investment. One would think that the most portable of possessions such as jewelry and silver—objects which carry a high insurance premium and have to be kept safely locked up—would be the first things to be sold when estates are being broken up, but Mr. Norton says, "Funnily enough, it is very often the pictures that leave the walls first, forcing the owners to then face the problems of redecoration." Indeed when substantial money has to be raised, it is the pictures and furniture that are usually reappraised first.

Today much of the antique jewelry and silver that S. J. Phillips has on display comes from private sources in America. The salesrooms in London and New York are, like the dealers, finding it difficult to get enough goods to sell, so prices remain high for anything of quality.

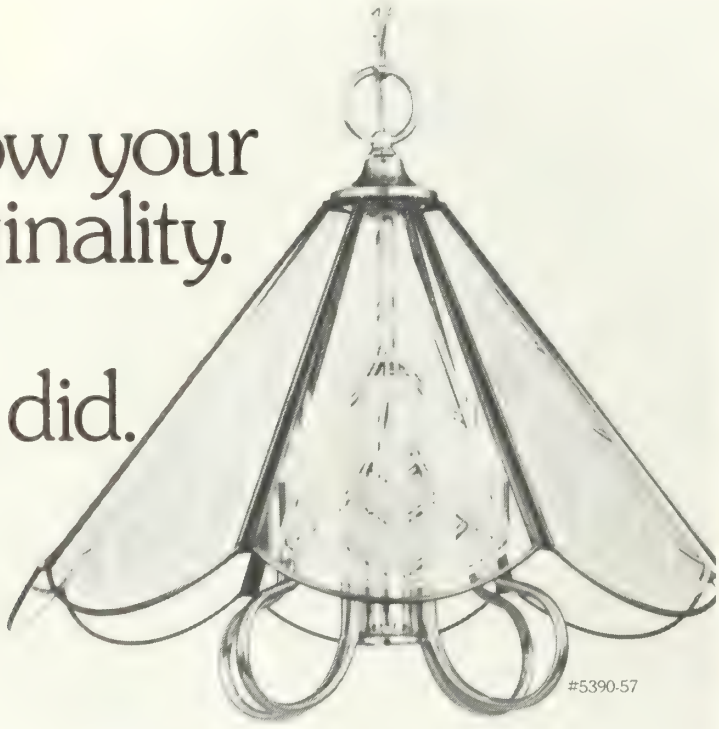


The classic cabinet-lined salesroom on London's New Bond Street.

The interest in collecting objects of virtu never dies out. The number of collectors is only limited by the amount of material available. Many dealers collect for themselves, which makes it more difficult for the layman to find pieces within his means. Last year S. J. Phillips's biggest client decided to give up buying gold boxes, but they found someone else to take his place with no difficulty. Asked what a young person with a limited amount of money should start to collect nowadays, Mr. Norton says, "At the moment eighteenth-century diamond jewelry is undervalued, as are small, very good pieces of English silver." □

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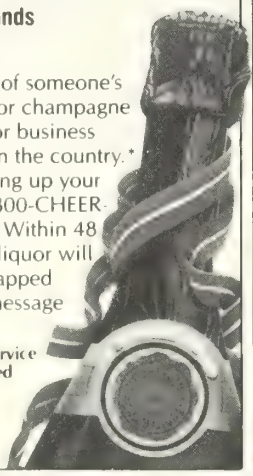
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CONNECTICUT FURNITURE

The myth that this colony's cabinetmakers were capricious hicks is contradicted by the subtle objects they left behind

By Robert F. Trent

In the past, Connecticut's eighteenth-century furniture did not appeal to urbane collectors, but nowadays major case pieces and the better chairs are commanding prices in the $80,000–$150,000 range. Clearly somebody thinks the stuff is of more than academic interest. Some collectors today seem to feel that the high-style (and far more expensive) pieces from the major colonial cities are too formal to live with and prefer the simpler Connecticut designs. And Connecticut furniture may have been slighted before because of persistent caricatures of its origins and appearance. The party line of dealers and even scholars used to go something like this: the inhabitants of Connecticut were conservative rustics who, paradoxically, were also individualistic and creative. Living in the country, Connecticut's people were always a little behind their contemporaries in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, and they reacted to new fashions in a neurotic manner, copying each new style but embellishing it with naïve, complex, original ornament. And, the caricature continues, they always used cherry wood finished the color of orange linoleum or maple syrup.



Samuel Loomis's cherry chest-on-chest, Colchester 1770–1790, is restrained in its overall form, bold in its ornament.

As we gaze upon the Chapins' dressing tables and framed chairs or Samuel Loomis's chests-on-chests, something begins to seem very wrong with this version of history. The Chapin examples are fairly plain, with little or none of the rococo carved ornament one expects to see on Philadelphia furniture of the same period, but the dark, resonant surfaces of the objects and their carefully calculated proportions do not seem at all countrified. Loomis's chest-on-chest (probably called a "case of drawers" during the period) is also dark and restrained in appearance, the ornament executed with economy. How are these objects to be squared with the popular notion that this furniture should be bizarre and orange? Clearly we need to consider the origins and intended effects of this furniture more carefully.

The historical reality of Connecticut life and Connecticut furniture, so far as scholars now understand it, was remarkably different and far more interesting than the creative-rube version.

By the 1750s, the colony was not simply a collection of farms inside a political boundary line. The ports along the coast and up the major rivers had populations in the 5,000–8,000 bracket, a respectable size by colonial standards. Connecticut was not prosperous and was controlled by a small clique of merchants who bought up grain, cattle, and lumber to exchange in Boston or New York for cloth, hardware, and other finished goods to sell back in Connecticut.

The woodworkers of Connecticut stood far below the merchants in wealth and prestige, but they, like their farmer clients, were not self-righteous hicks out of a WPA mural. They learned about the latest styles in three ways. First, they saw furniture that had been imported from Boston or Newport or New York. Most furniture historians have assumed that this was the principal way styles were transmitted, and much of the furniture made in Connecticut has therefore been misinterpreted as incompetent copies of urban models.

Another, far more prevalent way for new styles to reach rural towns was for a local boy to apprentice in a major urban shop, where he could copy or steal the patterns he needed and return home. And a third way was for an established cabinetmaker from a major seaport or even from England to move to Connecticut and set up shop.

These last two means of transmission were the most effective. They gave local cabinet- *(Continued on page 104)*

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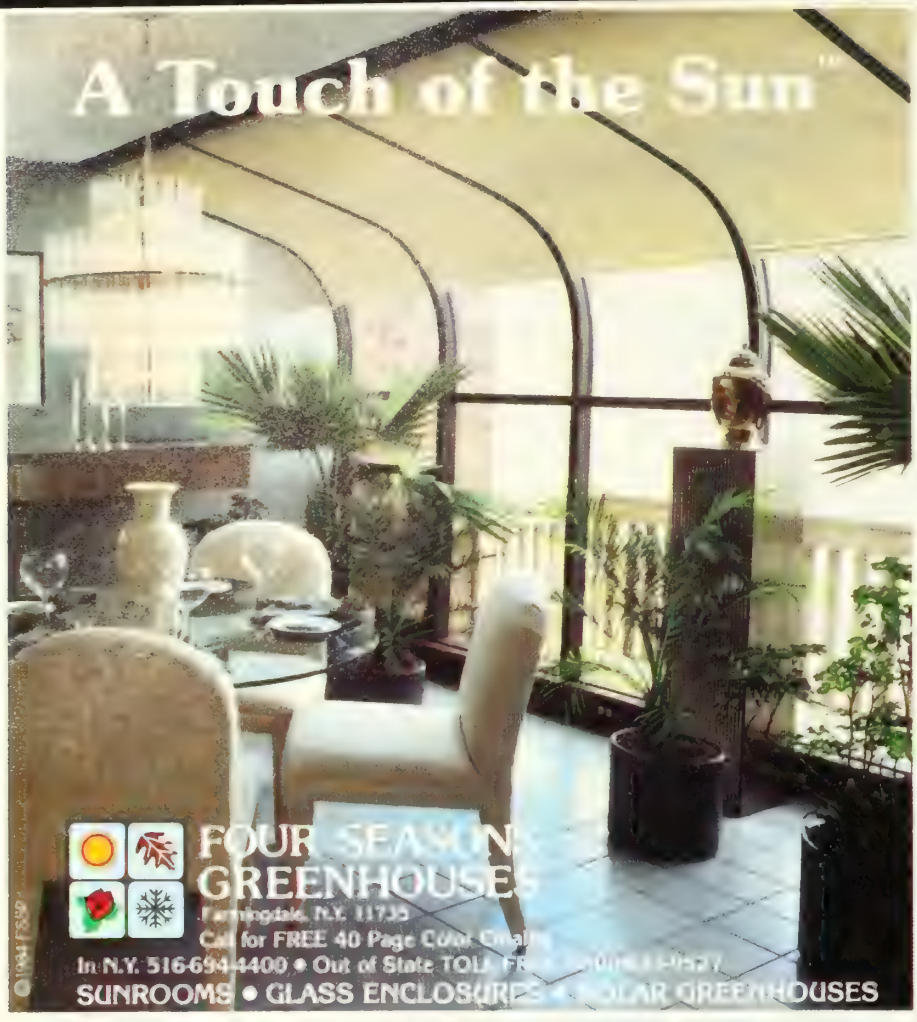


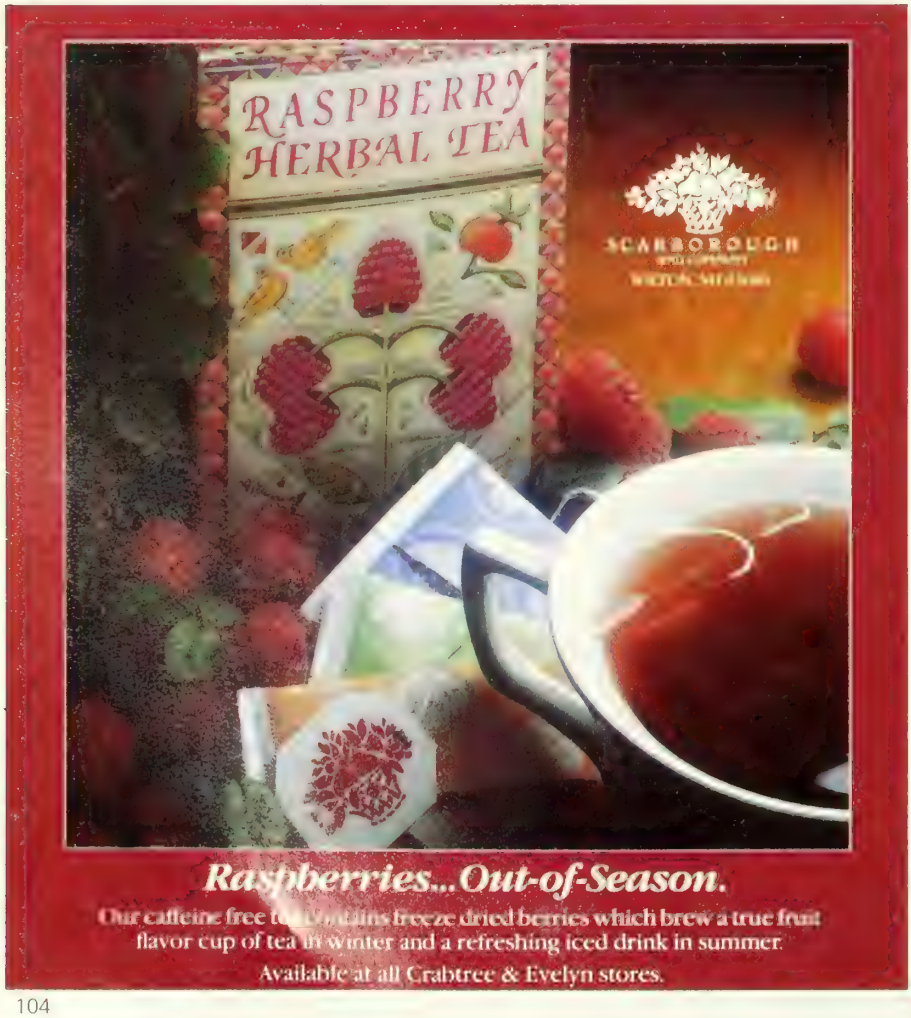
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(Continued from page 102) makers direct access to techniques and templates, or patterns, used to draw up the components of unfamiliar forms. Creativity really only intervened at the point when the artisan laid out the proportions of the piece and fitted the patterns for the various parts together.

In Connecticut and even in Boston and New York, most people could not afford the upholstered chairs and heavily carved high chests of drawers that figure so prominently in museum collections. The cheaper alternatives were the turned, rush-seated chairs that were produced in the thousands for shipment to country towns and the small board chests or chests of drawers made of softwoods and painted in imitation of walnut or mahogany. These cheap furniture forms sported the more obvious features of expensive, fashionable furniture, and they were influential in rural areas where wealthy people were few and far between.

On those few occasions in his working career when a Connecticut cabinetmaker was called upon to produce a case piece or a set of chairs "as good as any made in Boston," his first step was to search for the basic forms among the templates he had copied when an apprentice. Then the question of carving arose. In a large seaport, the various components of a major case piece were jobbed out to specialists like carvers, inlay makers, and gilders, thereby insuring a high level of workmanship throughout. In rural towns, the cabinetmaker had to provide all the ornament himself, *(Continued on page 106)*


THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Aaron Chapin's fine dressing table, Hartford 1784–1792, has unique carved cipher.

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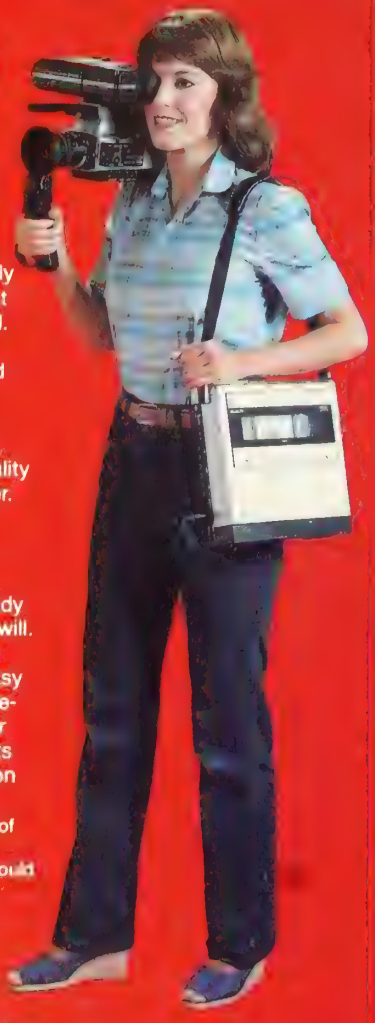
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(Continued from 104) and Connecticut artisans almost never achieved the kind of fluidity and crisp, naturalistic definition expected of the best urban carving.

The single-artisan factor does not fully account for the most elaborate Connecticut furniture of the 1770–1800 period, which seems so inventive or so bizarre to modern eyes. Some additional factors come to mind. Connecticut was influenced by many style centers, and what looks like inventiveness to us was often merely a selective combining of design elements from two or more urban schools. One or two particularly able artisans may have formulated a vocabulary of ornament that is strikingly different from known urban models, but the widespread practice of serving journeyman's time in an established master's shop meant that a successful type of ornament would quickly be taken up by five or more shops. For example, Benjamin Burnham and his apprentice Samuel Loomis, both of Colchester, evolved distinctive case pieces with dentiled cornice moldings, blocked fronts surmounted by Newport-style shells, spiral-carved quarter columns, and pagoda finials. But when case pieces with this ornament are examined, the construction of the internal structures indicates that many different artisans were responsible for practicing this ornamental mode. The explanation is simple. A master like Burnham who had struck upon a popular form or ornament *(Continued on page 108)*



Eliphalet Chapin's 1775 claw-foot armchair shows a Philadelphia influence.



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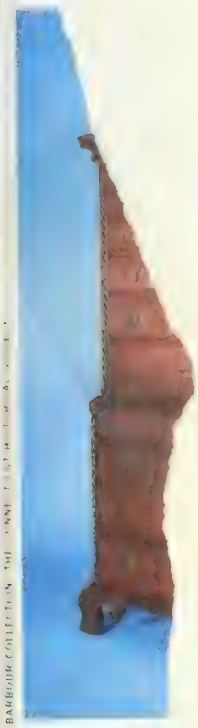
(Continued from page 106) had to fulfill a heavy demand before the fad for his style passed. Thus he had to run a large shop, with three or four apprentices and three or four journeymen. The apprentices would learn to make details like drawer dovetails from the master, and their dovetails would look just like Burnham's, but the journeymen would continue to make dovetails like those of their own masters. When they left Burnham's employ, their ornament would look the same, but their dovetails wouldn't. From the perspective of two hundred years, it's almost impossible to tell under what circumstances a given case piece was made and which ones represent the work of the master as opposed to his followers. In the case of Burnham and his apprentice Loomis, we possess signed examples of their work and documents identifying them as the makers of recognized examples that survived, but this kind of evidence is lamentably rare.

Collectors have always placed great emphasis on the fact that much of the best Connecticut furniture is made of cherry. Unfortunately, most of the examples they prize have been refinished a pale red or yellow color, when many examples still owned by descendants of important colonial families prove that the period practice was to finish cherry or maple the color of mahogany. It is not clear why cherry was so popular, for the wood has a number of drawbacks. It was not abundant. It was not available in the generous widths required to make case pieces with board sides. It was brittle and tended to warp and crack while it was seasoning. And mahogany was not that much more expensive.

But cherry had its attractive side. The wood has a fine texture and luster, and quartersawn boards display a minute ray figure that is unlike the fiery patterns of mahogany. This speckled ray figure of cherry definitely was a key factor in its popularity, because we know that some cabinetmakers fooled their customers by passing off sycamore, which has a similar ray figure, as cherry.

Dark finishes and subtly figured woods strongly influenced the apparent size and scale of Connecticut case pieces. The traditional regional house types had relatively small rooms with low ceilings that could not accommo-

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BOOKS

(Continued from page 110) a grid with a few diagonal avenues by Idelfons Cerdá, the man who invented the science of "urbanism," or at least the word.

Into this Barcelona an eighteen-year-old Antoni Gaudí arrived from Reus, a small town just outside Tarragona, to study architecture and there he stayed for the rest of his long life. His father was a boilermaker and this gave him a familiarity with metalwork which occasionally surprised his associates since he could take a hammer to red-hot iron like a smith. He was given, in any case, to interfering with masons with concrete shuttering, with the laying of broken crockery into cement (which became his favorite wall finish) long before Julian Schnabel did it.

But he was also a fine draftsman. His studies left him with the usual cultural baggage of the time, the bulk of it being his reading of Viollet-le-Duc, the most virulent restorer of French cathedrals and Empress Eugénie's favorite architect, who proclaimed the gospel of a rational medieval architecture as a prophecy for the future. This suited Gaudí's partisanship of Catalan independence: most of Barcelona's buildings of any distinction were Gothic after all, since little had been done in Barcelona or elsewhere in Catalonia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Though Gaudí also liked to invoke the Oriental, Catalonia was never firmly part of Moorish Spain but a flirtation with North Africa went well with the myth of Catalan grandeur. Gaudí's first important building, the house for Don Manuel Vicens, one of those enlightened Catalan industrialists on whom he relied, was clearly Moorish, though spiky. And there was a spikiness about everything which he did. Before he even started building, while still a student, he designed some settings and floats for those Catalan Floral games which might have come straight out of Viollet-le-Duc's visions of medieval decorations. At about the same time as he met Don Manuel Vicens, he also received commissions from two men of much the same group. The Marqués de Comillas asked him to design a villa for a relation on his estate in northern Spain near Santander, which became a kind of highbrow Catalan colony with palaces, a college, churches, and *(Continued on page 114)*















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(Continued from page 112) street decoration, all created by architects of the Catalan Modernism movement. In many accounts, Gaudí appears as an isolated genius, but in fact he was one of a number of architects working in Barcelona at the time. They were not of equal fire, but he sometimes owed a lot to them: Juan Martorell, Joseph Puig i Cadafalch, Luis Domenéch i Montaner, Joseph Domenéch i Estapa all subscribed to Catalan nationalism, all thought of themselves as modern. Some worked with Gaudí or built on adjoining sites. The group shared a common philosophy with their patrons, made up of varying doses of Ruskin and Nietzche, with a strong admixture of more or less orthodox Catholic piety.

The most lavish in his patronage of Gaudí was the textile magnate, Don Eusebio Güell. In 1882–83 he had stables and a metal gate to his country property done, the gate being a fearful metallic monster. Three years later came a vast and luxurious town house off the Ramblas, now a theater museum; about 1890 a workers' colony was laid out with Gaudí's participation, for which he designed a chapel; only the crypt was built. And in 1900 work started on the Parque Güell. Planned as a "model" garden suburb in the north of Barcelona, it nearly ruined its patron, and only certain large fragments were built.

Gaudí, who at the beginning of his career affected the manner of a gentleman-architect, arriving at the site in a carriage from which he would only reluctantly come down, suffered a rigorous religious conversion, and changed his style of life without any corresponding break in his architectural style. The Lent of 1894 was something of a crisis: he nearly starved himself to death, and a bishop was required to get him to eat. He was given some very bulky church commissions—a palace for the Bishop of Astorga in northwest Spain, the remodeling of the interior of Palma Cathedral on Majorca, and so on. But the project that became his life was the Church of the Holy Family, one he took over from an older architect in 1883 and on which he was working when he died in 1926.

Nothing was ever roofed. Gaudí, with his closest collaborator, the sculptor Lorenz Matamala, worked not only on the construction, but on the grossly opulent allegoric sculpture and the crockery ornament which covered much of the surface of the building. The symbolic system was built up from human figures in all shapes and sizes, birds and plants. They were modeled from multiple-view photographs taken with the help of several mirrors as well as plaster casts (casting chloroformed birds must have been squalid as well as awkward!). Each figure in the scheme had an allegoric role: and that is the first difference between Gaudí and the Art Nouveau designers with whom he is so often aligned in the "normal" histories of art, as that by Mr. William Curtis, for instance, whose *Modern Architecture Since 1900* gives him half a chapter. However, besides his obsessional interest in allegory and in *verismo*—to take a term used for the operas of Leoncavallo and Mascagni but equally apt for Gaudí's ornament—there is another side to his work which is quite remote from the stylization and artiness of Art Nouveau, and that is his passion for structure. He invented, or rather reinvented for himself the method of designing structures by inversion. Eighteenth-century mathematicians had discovered that you can arrive at a uniquely stable structural shape by reversing the curve which a string or a chain assumes when it is loosely hung *(Continued on page 116)*



Gaudí following the procession of Corpus Christi, behind the banner of the Artistic Circle of St. Luke in 1924.

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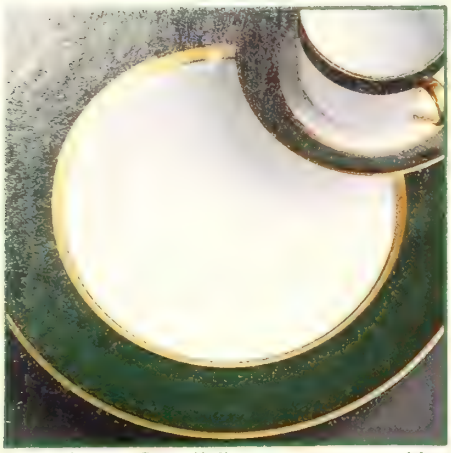
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(Continued from page 114) between two points, or weighted at even intervals: this curve was called the catenary or chain curve, to distinguish it from a parabola. Gaudí used this device in his working out of the Güell Chapel and continued to refer to it on other buildings. For the Güell Chapel, he attached a model of the site to the ceiling of his workshop, suspended cable from it and where the fall of the cable corresponded to key points of the structure, he hung bags of lead-shot. The cables he connected with planes of cloth and paper so that he had a complete upside-down model of the building, with the entire structure working in suspension before he reversed it into stone and concrete.

The apparent spikiness of Gaudí's buildings is both a by-product of his obsession with the arithmetic of allegory (twelve apostles, four gospelmakers, fifteen mysteries of the rosary) which has to be "pointed" as clearly as possible, as well as with structural virtuosity. Added to these is the early fascination with Moorish architecture. A drawing for one of his first projects, a Franciscan mission house in Tangiers—a kind of Gaudían version of Berber architecture—was done in 1891–92, before Horta designed the famous rue Janson house in Brussels, usually counted as the first Art Nouveau interior.

Strangely enough another episode, in which these obsessions become outsize, has been rather neglected: an American millionaire, who saw the Gaudí buildings in Barcelona commissioned him in 1908 to design a vast, many-towered hotel outside New York. It was to have been slightly higher than the Eiffel Tower, and nearly as tall as the Empire State Building. Nothing came of it, and the drawings which survive are all copies by a collaborator. George Collins, who has done the only substantial book on Gaudí drawings (altogether too substantial you might even think) with Juan Bassegoda Nonell, did not, therefore, include the scheme in his catalogue, but has contributed a chapter on it to Roger Descharnes's book on Gaudí of which a new edition has just appeared. It is the most valuable part of the book, written in that strident and aggressive tone that Dali always uses in talking about modern art. Dali, as Descharnes's patron and the best-known Catalan at the moment, has contributed a preface which will show you exactly what I mean if you read it. Dali and several other Catalan apologists for Gaudí, have surrounded his reputation with an aura of defiant daftness and made him into a proto-Surrealist who despised (and was despised by) all architectural rationalists. This is simply not true, and misleading. In the early thirties, the "modernist" Barcelona architectural magazine *AC* was always quoting Gaudí as a precursor of the modern movement. Le Corbusier himself registered his homage to Gaudí on his first visit to Barcelona in 1928 and has repeated it since.

The proto-Surrealist picture also presented Gaudí as a lonely genius. In fact he was not only one of a brilliant group of contemporaries that I mentioned earlier, but had a number of remarkable and still virtually unknown disciples, all of whom built a great deal in and around Barcelona. José Maria Jujol has recently been given a little publicity as it was the centenary of his birth. But César Martinell (whose first little book, *Gaudínismo,* grew into a full-scale study of his master) is still virtually unknown. Tokutoshi Torii, a young Japanese architect who moved to Spain ten years ago is a latter day disciple. His two-volume work is a vast compilation, attempting a systematic account of Gaudí, his sources and his works, but by themes. He has made much of the Mission House at Tangiers which many writers on Gaudí gloss over for lack of information as the one project in which many of his exoticisms are focused. It is a crabbed book and constantly elusive in the style of all Spanish Gaudí enthusiasts. But it is the one book which anyone investigating Gaudí in the future will have to have, even if it is too bulky and too crammed full of matter for the lay enthusiast; that is why the monograph on Gaudí by Ignasi de Solà-Morales is the only book on Gaudí you actually need to buy. He understands both the genius and the quirky background, makes sense of *Gaudínismo* and is the only one to give a clear and chronological survey of the work.

Still Dali was very proud of his prophecy (which he claims to have made privately to Le Corbusier and has been quoting publicly ever since) that future archi- *(Continued on page 118)*

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(Continued from page 116) tecture would be "soft and hairy," paranoiac, Catholic, and Catalan. Yet Gaudí's work was hard and spiky, and almost relentlessly rational, like that of many artists who are called "mystics." His genius depended on the particular twist he gave to the interpretation of his context, that Catalan amalgam of liberal industrialism, Wagnerian mistiness, nostalgia for a history which has turned to myth, and defiant provincialism. It was certainly cranky, but the crankiness was in the context, and the genius in the interpretation. There was no confidence trick in Gaudí.□

Books in brief

PIERRE DEUX'S FRENCH COUNTRY
By Pierre Moulin, Pierre LeVec, and Linda Dannenberg
Clarkson N. Potter, Inc.,
300 pp., $35

Pierre Deux's French Country by Pierre Moulin, Pierre LeVec, and Linda Dannenberg is an excellent trip through Provence from the owners of the successful stores specializing in products from that region of France. Illustrated in color, the tour covers wide ground, both in style and custom, as well as place. We go from the Souleiado Mansion in Tarascon, where the printing of Provençal cottons began in the eighteenth century to the potteries of Moustiers and to Arles, the home of the best cabinetmakers.

There are interesting lessons to be learned on how wood blocks were first used for printing, how the patterns were copied from materials brought from India in the seventeenth century, and how these cottons, known as *indiennes,* became the fashion of France in dress and furnishing. We learn how pots were thrown and glazed and tiles were painted. There are fascinating details about the origins of Provençal furniture and which carved curve denotes which region. There is good information on the stone, wrought iron, roof tiles, and the *pigeonniers* of Provence. The book takes us into some charming private houses and into poetic gardens. Finally, it spins the reader around the world to visit rooms decorated with Souleiado fabric and Provençal furniture. Though Guy Bouchet's photographs are very beautiful, the text seemed a bit overbearing. While grateful for the information, I could not help feeling that the colors were too often called "vibrant," the summer "searing," the wind "staggering," the grapevines "lush." I wish the writers had more readily followed their own excellent quote: "There is an earthiness to the style of Provence that is anathema to pretension," and allowed the well served eye to its own adjectives. *Diana Phipps*

CITIES AND THE WEALTH OF NATIONS:
PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMIC LIFE
By Jane Jacobs
Random House, 257 pp., $17.95

Anyone familiar with Jane Jacobs's writings will know what to expect from her seemingly optimistic title: things are bad and likely to get worse. The USA is in economic decline; so is the USSR; and the EEC; and COMECON. Anything not declining is just underdeveloped. In this landscape of gloom a few islands of economic sanity stand out, like Hong Kong or Singapore. Economic health (which to her seems synonymous with infinite growth) is the exclusive property of the city which can "replace wide ranges of its imports (with home products) exuberantly and repeatedly." Inevitably, she offers no recipe for sparking off such exuberance, though she rightly insists that it certainly cannot result from either military overbudgeting or from paternalistic economic aid. Her jeremiads on both subjects may sound a little tired, but they are true enough, though readers who expect this prophet to follow them with apocalyptic damnation or visionary promise will be disappointed. If she does have a remedy for "stagflation" she has hidden it between the lines of her book. And if I have read there rightly, then it seems that Jane Jacobs would like to see the end of national sovereignty (and therefore of wars) in some kind of world authority to prevent further war on one hand, and on the other a fragmentation of world economy so that each city-region could be self-adjusting and each issue its own currency. The program she knows to be unattainable—so she writes fluently and trenchantly to confirm ingrown ideas rather than to stimulate new ones.

Joseph Rykwert



Sculpture shown smaller than actual size of approximately 6 1/2" high × 9" long.

The Glossy Amethyst Orchid

by Ronald Van Ruyckevelt

A life-size sculpture of incredible realism in fine hand-painted porcelain.

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Ronald Van Ruyckevelt is a sculptor of extraordinary talents whose medium is fine porcelain. His private commissions include sculptures created for official presentation to President John F. Kennedy and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. And among connoisseurs of fine porcelain he is particularly noted for his remarkable ability to create bird and flower sculptures with the look of real life.

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1



THE WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN

Photographed at the peak of its spring color, the garden designed for President Kennedy has just been restored at the request of President and Mrs. Reagan

BY RACHEL LAMBERT MELLON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES

The inspiration for renewing the rose garden at the White House came from President Kennedy in 1961. My involvement began at a picnic on a hazy summer day in August at our beach house on Cape Cod, surrounded by sand dunes, the sea, and sailboats. It was a picnic for a few friends and included President and Mrs. Kennedy. Hardly had the President come ashore from his boat when he suggested we sit down and discuss a garden for the White House.

He and Mrs. Kennedy had just returned from a state visit to France, followed by stops in England and Austria. The President had noted that the White House had no garden equal in quality or attractiveness to the gardens that he had seen and in which he had been entertained in Europe. There he had recognized the importance of gardens surrounding an official residence and their appeal to the sensibilities of all people.

He wanted to start, in the greatest haste, to remake the area near his office at the west end of the White House, known as the Rose Garden, into an area both useful and attractive. Would I design it for him? It was a startling request, to say the least.

As an amateur, I questioned my ability to design a garden of such importance. Paying little attention to that doubt, he bubbled with enthusiasm, with fascinating details of how he wanted a garden to appeal to the most discriminating taste, yet a garden that would hold a thousand people for a ceremony. What gardener could resist? I agreed, on the spot, to meet in September.

Time passed, and the day came when I called the White House as promised and spoke to J.B. West, the chief usher, who arranged a day for our meeting in the garden. Perry Wheeler, a friend and a landscape architect living and practicing in Washington, agreed to come with me. He seemed to me a likely collaborator. I was fortunate in this choice for from the beginning to the end of the project, he remained always interested, always helpful, and ever the honest critic.

I vividly remember my first impression of the scene and the setting for the projected garden. The White House proper seemed exceptionally tall where it joined the long, low colonnade that linked it to the Oval Office and Cabinet Room. There were no trees near this wing or the corner by the White House, except for Andrew Jackson's tall, dark *Magnolia grandiflora* near the South Portico. Beneath the magnolias was a long semicircular white bench on which Perry Wheeler and I sat facing the President's office.

The garden had a simple plan. Four rows of clipped privet hedges about four feet tall ran the full length. In the plan of parallel lines were tucked away Tom Thumb roses and occasional standard roses. We sat a long time trying to imagine how this area could be designed to reflect the requirements the President had so clearly outlined to me that day at the Cape.

Beyond the colonnade, the door of the Oval Office opened suddenly, and the President came out and in his usual brisk way crossed the lawn to greet us. His first

The crab apples in the Rose Garden have benefited from last year's heavy pruning; this year blossoms cover the trees. *Overleaf:* Tulip bulbs today are part of a catch-as-catch-can consignment allotted with other bulbs for the Washington parks, and therefore often lack the subtlety of colors chosen especially for the Rose Garden in the past. For the original planting list, please see Garden Pleasures.

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At the far end of the Rose Garden, *above,* ferny metal chairs are temporarily grouped under the magnificent *Magnolia grandiflora* planted by President Andrew Jackson. *Opposite:* The view toward the colonnade that shades the Cabinet Room and Oval Office shows one of the four *Magnolia Soulangiana* trees planted in each of the four corners of the garden.

words were, "What do you think can be done? Have you any ideas?" Although I had no thoughts of what to do at the moment, President Kennedy's enthusiasm and interest were so contagious that I felt I must certainly find him a good solution.

I explained that I would have to think about it now that I had seen the space. The tall central block of the White House in one corner and the West Wing, with its two low colonnades forming boundaries west and north, would have to be united in a harmonious and uncomplicated way. To the south there was no "wall" of architecture, just open space.

After that first impression of the garden and my talk with the President, my sense of responsibility for redesigning the garden was very strong. I hoped to find an inspiration that would help me bring all of the President's requirements together. It was not until the end of October—the trees had lost their leaves—when late one afternoon, cold with the feeling of approaching winter and descending darkness, I was walking along Fifth Avenue in New York and looked up and saw three lovely magnolia trees growing in front of the Frick museum.

I had often admired these trees before, but this evening they had a special importance to me. Their pale silvery branches with heavy twigs seemed to retain the light of summer. I knew their pattern of growth would continue to give form in winter and would catch raindrops as well as tufts of falling snow. I felt I could now design the President's garden!

I envisioned all four corners planted with *Magnolia Soulangiana.* These trees would soften the difficult corners that were now bare and would permit sufficient light to fall beneath and around them to allow planting. A 50-by-100-foot lawn, large enough to accommodate a thousand people for ceremonial activities and receptions and small enough to be covered by a tent, would be in the center of the garden.

On either side of the large lawn there could be a border twelve feet wide in which to plant smaller trees, roses, and other flowers. The President loved flowers and asked if a variety of other types could be mixed with the roses. He had read the published garden notes of Thomas Jefferson and hoped for flowers used in Jefferson's period.

At the west end near his office, the steps were to be redesigned, for the President wanted them to serve both as steps and as a platform or stage. A central step was to be wider than the others, so that he could stand a little above the heads of the crowd in order that they might see and



The garden steps were designed with a central step widened to serve as a platform following President Kennedy's idea that they should be an important adjunct for ceremonies. *Overleaf:* Twenty years later the double line of crab apples makes its own sculptural design as well as creating shadows on the tulips and lapis-blue *Muscari* beneath.

hear him more clearly. Above this "platform step" were to be three others, upon which those being honored would stand, above the President.

Opposite the steps, at the east end of the garden, a flagstone terrace was to be laid under the historic *Magnolia grandiflora.* Here the President wished to have a place where he could sit and entertain his guests or, perhaps, hold a small luncheon.

I had before me an interesting problem involving a fascinating place. The site had once been a stable yard; but due to its location beneath the great windows of the State Dining Room, the stable was soon relocated. Vegetables had been planted there by President Grant. In the range of rooms along the colonnade had been a milk house, icehouse, workshops, servants' dwelling rooms, and numbers of other small, thick-walled chambers called, in the earliest times, household "offices."

The first rose garden known there had been a dreamlike Victorian garden under glass, part of a large complex of greenhouses begun before the Civil War. A "rosehouse" was only part of the vast glazed domains, which also had rooms for palms, orchids, fruit trees, and camellias. As the greenhouses grew, their magnificence increased. The rose house, as it was called, was a plain, but very tall, rectangular glass structure that fit into the ell of the West Wing, the area of the present Rose Garden. Inside, the roses, planted in rows, were "farmed" more than being set out ornamentally. These rows were crisscrossed by water pipes with low sprinklers. Canvas curtains, like the studio curtains in *La Boheme*, protected the masses of delicate blossoms from violent summer sunshine.

Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt planted what she called her "Colonial Garden" on the spot in 1902, following the removal of the greenhouses by Charles McKim of the architectural firm McKim, Mead & White. Her charming portrait in the White House shows her seated in the Colonial Garden on a pretty wooden bench, with the South Portico in the background. Here she wanted only sweet peas, black-eyed susans, quince—and the jasmine in which she and Theodore Roosevelt took great delight on summer evenings, as they sat in white painted rocking chairs on the South Portico.

Through time, the White House has had occupants who have loved gardens and some who have not. Even among the "gardeners," there were different preferences. Mrs. Taft, for example, preferred potted tropical plants inside to flower beds outside.







Tables and chairs just outside the President's office, *above,* provide an atmosphere of country informality. *Opposite:* As you leave the Rose Garden facing south you look out onto the Ellipse and the Washington Monument beyond.

The one flower that unites all the occupants through the history of the White House is the rose. Thus, for most of the twentieth century, the Rose Garden has been a rose garden. Now, in 1961, President Kennedy wanted it restored in spirit but revised to become more than just a private garden.

My theory of the garden design calls for an overall outline, which I call the "bone structure," the most important element. Designing a garden is not unlike designing a building: you begin with the skeleton sketch, a general pleasing outline or form, and proceed from there. Within this structure, you can make subdivisions as you choose, more complicated or more detailed than the general form.

In late November, my husband and I were invited to a dinner at the White House; Pablo Casals was to play. I was seated across the table from the President.

He looked over to me before sitting down and said with an inquiring smile, "Bunny, where is my garden plan?"

"I'm afraid it is still in my head, Mr. President, not yet down on paper, but I will finish it and send it to you soon."

"That's the story of my administration," he quipped, with a sparkle and a twinkle in his eye.

This informal exchange, brief as it was, spurred me to move ahead more quickly. A plan went down on paper, and I sent it to the President for approval. Within two days, I received his note of acceptance. I would have the full cooperation of the National Park Service. All costs would be covered by the Park Service, but I was to keep expenses as low as possible.

An important first step was to find someone to manage and implement the work of the Rose Garden. There was an official over the gardens and grounds at the White House, but we needed a specialist with varied experience who understood all aspects of the undertaking. I set out to study local National Park Service gardens.

One day in the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens in Washington, D.C., I met Irvin *(Text continued on page 251)*







WHERE BEAUTY IS NOT A LUXURY

Emmanuelle and Quasar Khanh restore an Auguste Perret house

BY MARIE-PIERRE TOLL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI



The south façade of the house, *top,* designed by Auguste Perret in 1932. *Above:* Emmanuelle Khanh on her terrace. *Opposite:* In the hall, with its original marble and stone floor, the sculptures are by Anthony Donaldson.



Emmanuelle's bedroom looks down on the ample *terrasse* of the southern façade, *above*. The Lloyd Loom chairs and tables were found here and there by Emmanuelle. Jade-green car paint gives them a unity. *Opposite:* The sitting room or ballroom opens onto the dining room. The leather armchairs were the only furniture in the house when it was bought and were originally in navy-blue fabric.

Architect Auguste Perret's phrase "*le beau n'est pas un luxe*"—beauty is not a luxury—is well applied to this French house which he built in 1932, and Emmanuelle and Quasar Khanh fell upon happily in 1975.

The house blends the rigor, the purity of lines of the thirties with the charm of old-time arrangement: the traditional suite of dining room, large sitting room or ballroom, smoking room or den, library, and large hall. Though the exterior of the house is severe, the details inside are softened and humanized by *prêt-à-porter* stylist Emmanuelle Khanh and inventor Quasar Khanh.

The spiritual mentor of Le Corbusier, who worked with him, Perret is best known as the father of reinforced concrete and for the Champs-Elysées Theatre, l'Ecole Normale de Musique, industrial buildings, and the renovation of the French port of Le Havre. Among the very few houses that he built, the Khanhs feel this is his best. Through functional structure, the architect tried to enhance the sense of order, symmetry, and proportion of classic architecture. While the façade of the house is treated like the façade of a monument, the terrace and exterior stairs leading to the garden are spacious and open.

Perret built it for an Egyptian, Arakel Nasar Bey, whose grandfather had participated in the Suez Canal. After the bey's death, his wife had closed up the house except for the second floor to which she retired, until her death. When the Khanhs arrived in mid-winter 1975, it was empty, stalagtites hung from the ceilings, and the steel had rusted inside the concrete, forcing them to resurface the entire house. Emmanuelle finds it "reassuring (*Text continued on page 244*)




Ici on joue
au
BILLARD RUSSE



Quasar's studio, or the
immer room, *this page,*
ith a model of one of
s latest airplane
esigns. *Opposite:* The
illiard room didn't
xist; the space was used
or storage. The Khanhs
reated a semicircular
pening to reveal the
taircase, bring in light.







The pink marble table, *opposite,* was designed for the dining room by Quasar Khanh. Flamingos were collected by Emmanuelle in California; 1930 Venetian chandelier. *Above left:* "When I love something, I like to accumulate it": Emmanuelle fills a console with flamingo candles and vases. *Above right:* A 1930 rolling table with handblown glass candlesticks "à la Cocteau." *Below:* Pair of 1930 baker's boxes, Depression glassware.





In the living room, *this page,* a 1930 lit table from the flea market. On it, a 1930 plexiglass bowl said to have been on the *Normandie.* Drawing by Silvio Pasotti. *Opposite:* Emmanuelle's bedroom with a plexiglass table by Quasar Khanh and a chrome and velvet modern chair. The head is a pot where Emmanuelle stores her pencils.



HOUSTON HARMONY

Decorator Mark Hampton brings his special brand of tranquility to Texas

BY ALICE GORDON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

People all over Texas admire the architecture of John Staub, who was responsible in the twenties, thirties, and forties for establishing the dignified look of Houston's most widely regarded residential section, River Oaks. John Staub, however, learned the ropes from a New Yorker named Harrie T. Lindeberg, who, from 1919 to 1921, before River Oaks was begun, built four large houses in different period styles on a special block in a much smaller Houston enclave. In 1983, interior designer Mark Hampton finished redecorating the Italianate house for a young couple whose family was among the first to live in the area.

That couple lives happily in their Harrie T. Lindeberg house because



For the living room in this Houston house, Mark Hampton had the Brunschwig & Fils chintz dipped in creamy dye to deepen the pink, soften the glaze. Mirrors are in Jacobean revival-style frames. Walls were once "orange marmalade" pine paneling, now artfully gessoed, sanded, dry painted. Clarence House velvet covers the owner's grandfather's library chair, a comfortable, sentimental favorite. Black-and-gilt chairs are George III. Rug by Stark.







Over the Georgian side table in the entrance hall, *above,* is a painting by Chagall, a friend of the family. Clock is 18th-century English. In the adjoining living room, a portrait of the owner's mother by Murray Bewley. *Right:* The cozy library comprises warm colors and plush textures, equestrian prints in faux-bois frames, and favorite objects, including pre-Columbian pieces and a collection of Austrian bird bronzes, at right. On coffee table, a mare and foal by Texas sculptor Jim Reno. Rug by Stark.





The Waterford crystal chandelier in the dining room, *above,* was left unwired, and the couple's dinner parties are always lit exclusively by candles. Above fireplace, an 18th-century Italian still life. China is Royal Worcester from the 18th century.
Left: An English shaving stand, circa 1800, was found in London on a buying trip and has been converted into a working sink in the visitors' cloakroom. On the tortoise-shell lacquer walls are plates depicting various regiments of the French military, circa 1870.

Mark Hampton understood that it deserved respect and that it would repay in kind the peaceable treatment he and his clients gave it. "The house is beautifully constructed," Hampton says, "and all the rooms have a different architectural character; we wanted to follow the architecture in the decorating. And it had to be comfortable because there are children in the house." (In fact, as we go to press, there is a new little girl in the family, one week old.)

The house is surrounded by fat, gnarled old oaks. In the previous dark interior, the trees made the rooms even darker. To lighten the situation, Jim Smart, a trompe-l'oeil painter from London, moved in with the couple for a month, completely transforming the walls in the house. Now, Hampton points out, the house has a wonderful shadowy quality—"dare I say chiaroscuro?" he chuckles.

A good amount of the furniture was found on buying trips the couple took with Hampton to New York, London, and Paris. But much of it has been in the family for generations, long admired and well taken care of. Mark Hampton has responded to his clients' belongings with a family member's sympathy, and, as seems to be the rule in Mark Hampton's life, those clients have responded with fast friendship. □

Editor: Clare Ruthrauff



The inspiration for the rich buff walls in the loggia came, says Mark Hampton, from the "faded Italian sunset" color of the exterior, the result of weathering without new paint for sixty years. Rattan furniture, in fabrics by Brunschwig, is from the thirties. The substantial pot by the sofa held olive oil in 19th-century Greece.



The curves of Victorian satinwood furniture complement the Syrie Maugham–style beds in the daughters' bedroom, *above,* done in Brunschwig chintz and wallpaper. *Right:* The guest room, in Scalamandré toile, was decorated around the Empire furniture, once in servants' quarters, given to the owner by his mother and grandmother. *Opposite:* The master bedroom's George III bed and prized antique Aubusson were both found in London. Painted chair is Hepplewhite. Printed linen from Brunschwig. Linens by Pratesi.



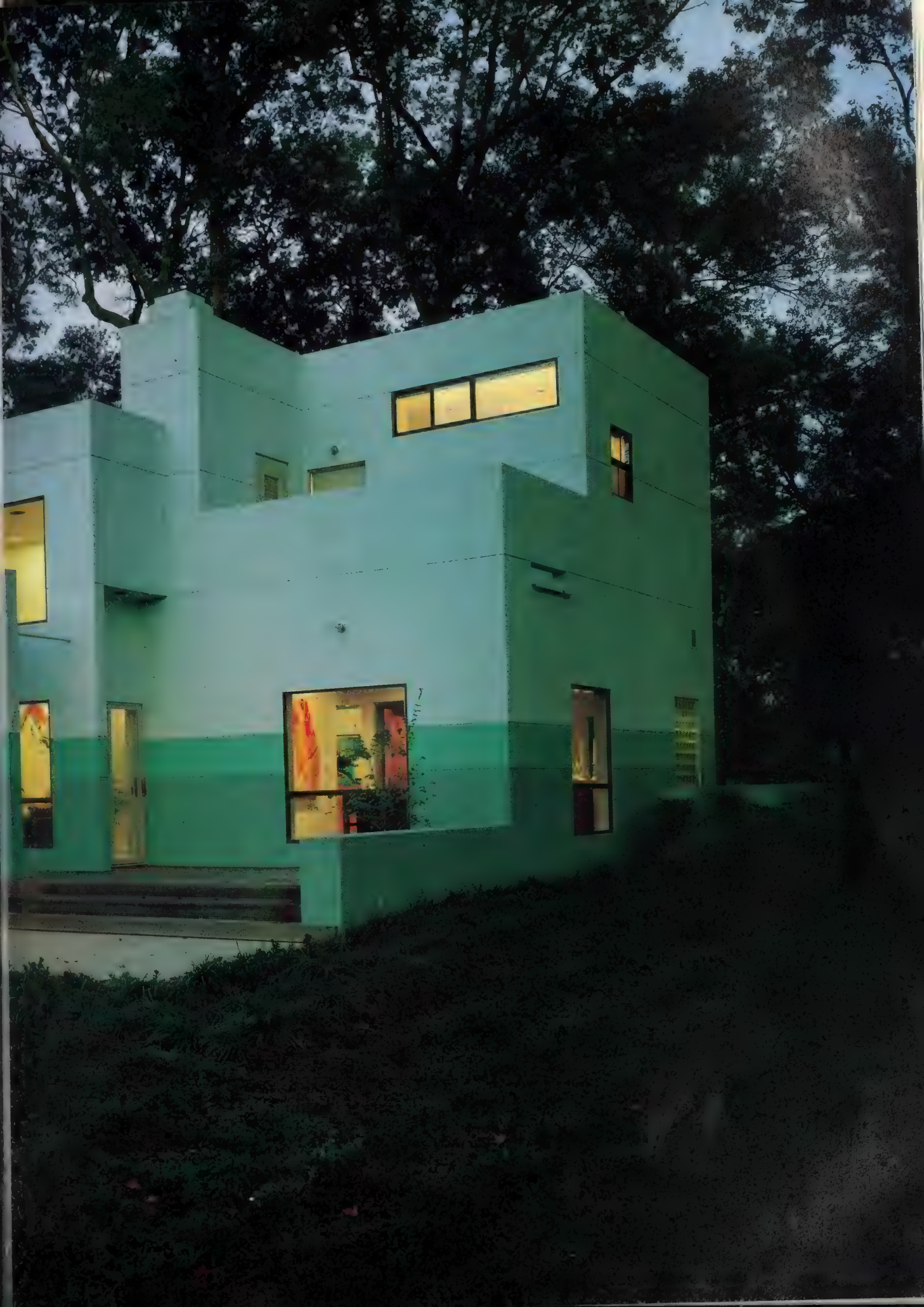




THE MODERNIST STRIPE

Architects Thomas Lonnecker and Peter Papademetriou design a Louisiana waterside house that reflects the hues of Lake Charles

BY LISA GERMANY PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER AARON





The three pastel colors of the Strauss house, *preceding pages,* mark a progression from ground to sky, elaborating on the natural hues of this landscape of bayous and coulees. *Opposite:* The upper-gallery level silhouettes the sensuous curves of an Isozaki chair in deep eggplant. *Above:* A front door shows a redwood side to the exterior; the interior side is oak, complementing other oak touches throughout the house.

Local legend in Lake Charles has it that Jean Lafitte and his gang carried contraband into the bayous and coulees that fray the edges of Louisiana. These little inlets, dark and wooded, were still more or less hidden when Julie Ann Strauss was growing up there during the thirties and while she was away at Vassar in the forties. They remained so even in the fifties when, with her husband Kenneth Strauss, she started to raise a family. But by 1977, the land around this warren of marshy waterways had begun to be developed, and the Strausses bought a choice piece on the banks of the Nelson Coulee. They contacted Houston architect Peter Papademetriou, whose name they had discovered in Mr. Strauss's *Princeton Alumni Weekly,* and they began to articulate to him and later to his partner, Tom Lonnecker, what they wanted in their new house.

They communicated a certain predilection for crisp modern lines; they insisted on a floor plan that would accommodate the visits of their grown children, and they asked for ample storage space. Mrs. Strauss had read *The Place of Houses* by Charles Moore, Donlyn Lyndon, and Gerald Allen and had begun to wonder if her house couldn't be arranged around a central gallery the way the Russell house in Charleston, South Carolina (which was discussed in the book), had been arranged around a staircase. Since Mr. and Mrs. Strauss's art collection consists for the most part of rare eighteenth- and nineteenth-century glass in luminous candy colors, they both hoped to exhibit it to its best advantage. "We looked upon the house as a way to simplify our lives," says Mrs. Strauss. "We wanted it to remove all the clutter and make things we love stand out." Although they did not forget how much they valued the natural beauty of their lot or their desire for the views it afforded, Mrs. Strauss admits, "We never gave Peter or Tom any caveats about the exterior."

That is how it happened *(Text continued on page 230)*





A freestanding wall, *opposite*, picks up the dimensions of the living-room walls, frames views through its windows, protects it from the harsh southern sun, and acts as a kind of flying buttress supporting the all-wood house. *This page*: The lower gallery, where tortoise-shell glass, amberina, and satin glass are proudly displayed. Gray tile unites the rooms of the first floor. Painting to the left is Gary Stephan's *Two Brothers*.



The lavenders and lilacs of the living room are enlivened by the art of hometown Lake Charles artist Lynda Benglis, whose *Cinquo* from the "Knot" series is on the far wall. Painting on the left is Darryl Hughto's *Layer Cake*. Coffee table is by Isozaki.





HOUSE ON CHEYNE WALK

Interior designer John Stefanidis lives beside the Thames in sun-flooded rooms that are comfortably grand

BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANÇOIS HALARD

Sitting-room walls, *opposite,* were stenciled in subtle faded colors. John Stefanidis based the design on an Islamic brocade. Drawing is a Matisse. *Above:* On 18th-century Venetian chest, a 20th-century bronze vase, Japanese candlesticks.





On the walls of the sitting room are antique prints of Rome. Fireplace is Adam. Upholstered furniture, designed by John Stefanidis, is covered in his fabrics.







Chelsea is a fashionable and romantic London district on the north side of the Thames whose houses bear more than the usual number of blue-enameled historic markers stating that this or that luminary once lived here. The list of former Chelsea residents includes monarchs, a saint, and many artists: Richard III lived here as a Duke in 1483. Thomas More settled in Chelsea in 1520 and here played host to Erasmus and Holbein. Henry VIII built a Chelsea manor house where Elizabeth I probably lived between her mother's and her father's deaths. Writers Thomas Carlyle, George Eliot, George Meredith, and Oscar Wilde had houses in the district, as did painters Turner, Sargent, and Whistler.

Whistler inhabited part of the only seventeenth-century great house that still stands in Chelsea, although the building was subdivided in the eighteenth century and now consists of three town houses. It is Whistler's old Cheyne Walk quarters on the riverfront that the London-based international interior designer John Stefanidis has owned for eight years.

Stefanidis is not immune to the historical glamour of his 1674 house: "The building stands on the site of Sir

The dining table, *opposite,* stands on a rich red carpet and under a white Dresden chandelier. Walls and woodwork are painted in several creamy colors. Chairs are a Stefanidis design. Drawings by Millington-Drake. *Above:* Another, less formal dining setting is the drawing room's sunny bay.



In the drawing room, Grinling Gibbons carving over the mantel, English 18th-century pull-up chairs, Indian ottoman with ivory legs. Armchairs in the bay are 17th-century Italian; table is English.







Thomas More's farm," he says, "and I look out my window at the same view Whistler so often sketched and painted." But it was his designer's eye that convinced Stefanidis to move here, where the rooms are large and tall and beautifully detailed and daylight streams through from morning till night. "The sparkling river light was irresistible," he recalls, adding, "Light is the first thing I perceive when I visit a new place."

John Stefanidis is known for his gentle way with rooms and houses and, indeed, with clients. He doesn't have a personal stamp that he feels he must set upon his every work. If a decorating connoisseur were able to spot a Stefanidis room in a flash, this discreet designer would feel he had done something wrong.

The spirit of the place is what concerns him most, for that determines his design, in the country or in town. At his weekend house (House & Garden, November 1981), which Stefanidis built out of tumble-down cowsheds, floors are brick, rough trusses are exposed. "No parquet floors or gessoed ceilings here," he explained. "That's for another kind of country house." When furnishing a London mews flat, Stefanidis is always properly modest and cozy. In his own Chelsea house, built for a lord, he moved nobly through the noble spaces, placing excellent antiques, works of art, rugs, and chandeliers, but without a shadow of pretentiousness. Pretentiousness is not in John Stefanidis's vocabulary.

Sense of place is one Stefanidis strength. He is also appreciated for his subtle sense of color, playing variations on soft neutral shades so skillfully that no feeling of monotony results. Another strong point is his way with scale, which he may bring up or down, the latter best seen in his own dining room, where guests in a twenty-foot-tall space sit convivially under ceilings lowered by a double frieze of pictures and a chandelier. Comfort is a constant Stefanidis preoccupation in rooms of any size or degree of formality: he designs almost all the upholstered furniture that appears in his rooms and plans it dimensionally and materially for the greatest ease.

How does it all add up on Cheyne Walk? The comment of a young visitor so pleased her host that he was willing to share it: "Whenever I come here, I feel I am in the right place." He hopes all his guests feel this way. □

Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet

A Regency chaise longue stands at the foot of a Regency fourposter bed hung in Stefanidis fabric. The large oil painting of Medici lap dogs is by Jacopo da Empoli. Cabinet of spaced dowels with glass top is by Stefanidis. Venetian mask in foreground hangs on a cheval-glass column.

ART OF THE ANKAS

Jill Cole designs a home base for Paul Anka and his family

BY GABRIELLE WINKEL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES WHITE



The gallery is dominated by *Sueiler's Albatross*, a 1976 lacquer and oil on aluminum by Frank Stella





A tray and cup by ceramist Mineo Misumo add dimension and interest to the custom-made glass and chrome coffee table in the Ankas' living room, *above.* On the window sill is a 1962 steel and wood sculpture by Mark Di Suvero. *Opposite:* Lynda Benglis's brass *Fandango,* 1979, hangs above a French marquetry desk.

The Paul Ankas are a family of collectors and collections. Paul collects gold records from "Diana" to "Times of Your Life." His Egyptian-born wife, Anne, collects contemporary art, Oriental porcelains, and eighteenth-century English decanters. Together they have a collection of five growing daughters, ages six to eighteen—all with the first initial *A.*

The center of all this collecting is a spacious hilltop house in Northern California. It was designed and built about seven years ago by Pasadena architects Conrad Buff and Donald Hensman—they also did the governor's mansion in Sacramento—to meet the requirements of a growing family, a professional recording studio, and an expanding art collection. The dramatic gallery is two stories high and runs from the front door to the back of the fireplace that walls off the living room; it doubles as an entertaining area and provides the distance needed to view the massive works by Ellsworth Kelly and Frank Stella.

After the main structure was completed, Jill Cole of Swimmer Cole Martinez Curtis supervised most of the interior work. The gallery divides the house into two main sections, the kitchen/family room and the entertainment area, which has the recording studio and media and exercise rooms. The Ankas opted for large spaces, which encourage family activities. Large comfortable sofas, most custom-made by Jill Cole, are covered in natural fabrics in natural colors, as are the walls. The fabric softens the hard edges of the tiled floors, stucco details, and



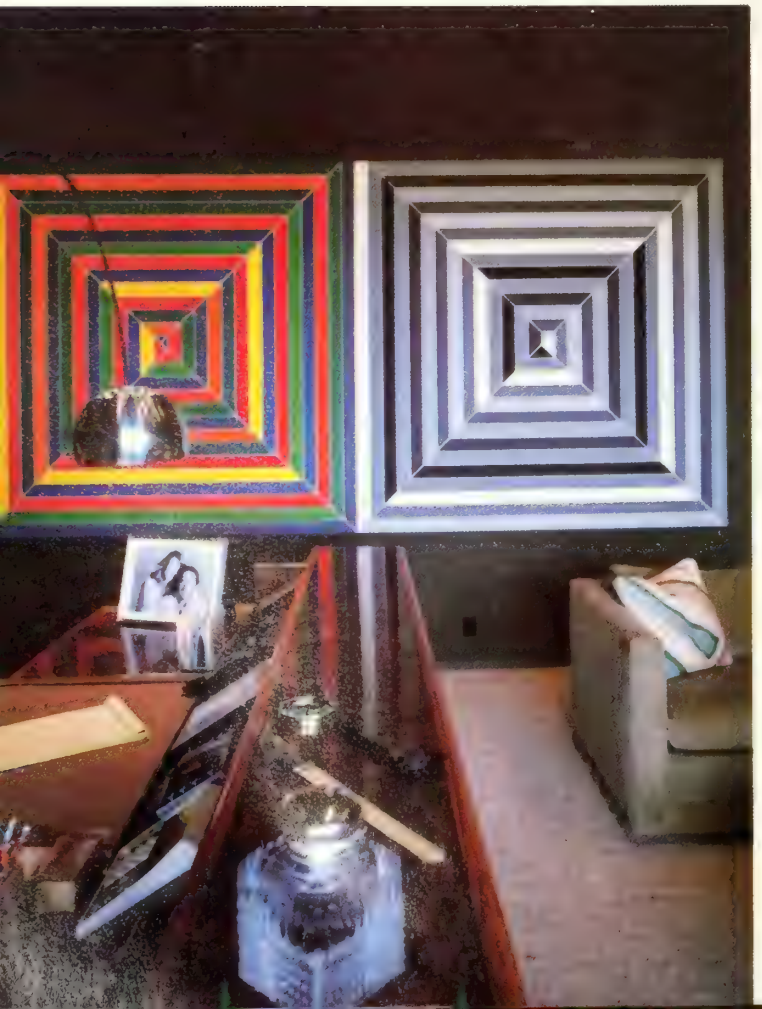


In the gallery from left to right: *Aluminum-Steel Plain,* 1969, by Carl Andre covers the floor in front of *Sleep for Yvonne Rainer,* 1965, by Robert Rauschenberg. Swimming pools on the French Riviera are the subject of Jennifer Bartlett's trio of watercolors, *In The Garden.* Alexander Calder's standing mobile, circa 1940, shares the top of the French commode with pieces from Anne's ceramic collection. One of the Ankas' first major purchases was *Green, Red, Yellow, Blue,* 1965, by Ellsworth Kelly; Donald Judd's 1965 plexiglass and stainless steel box is lit from above.





In the media room, *above,* the eyes of Anka are upon you: Warhol silkscreens done in the mid seventies. Many of Anne's crystal decanters are in use at the bar. *Below:* Walls in Paul's study are covered in suede and brought to life by Frank Stella's *Jasper's Dilemma,* 1962–63. Burl desk trimmed in teak was designed by cabinetmaker Art Finkle.



High above the kitchen complex, *opposite,* are two works by Jennifer Bartlett. The titles—*131 Green St/Patmos,* 1977, are a backdrop for *At Sea,* 1979. Five of Lynda Benglis's *Patang Fossil Papers,* 1979, line the wall below.

large paintings, and makes rearranging the paintings much easier.

Paul is often on the road—sometimes up to forty weeks a year. Work is both a hobby and profession and he is always coming home with the latest electronic or music-related gadget. Paul records in the house in a well-equipped soundproof studio; when he is "in session" the house is invaded by musicians.

Paul and Anne Anka began their collecting and family about eighteen years ago. "We started with young New York artists and then moved on to more 'blue chip' artists," Anne recalls. "I was brought up in Europe and was quite traditional—with eighteenth-century furniture, for instance. When we moved out west the contemporary look took over. The scale of decorating changed because we had these massive paintings. We did keep some of the signed pieces of antique furniture, which are very precious to me."

New York gallery owner Paula Cooper worked with the Ankas and found them "enthusiastic and thoughtful collectors, a joy to work with." With Paula Cooper's guidance, their acquisitions ranged from a Carl Andre aluminum-and-steel checkerboard sculpture on the floor to a Sol Lewitt sculpture of cubes in which an unsuspecting friend once placed his umbrella. Anne enjoys "different kinds of art in the house, not just the canvas on the wall. I like very unusual pieces and the idea of fitting them so they become a part of the house."

Though most of the pieces, which date primarily from the early sixties, were ones the Ankas saw and fell in love with, two were somewhat made to order. The Warhol portraits were made for Paul's *Painter* album. Anne had some help from artist Jennifer Bartlett in fitting the two enamel works on the kitchen wall—"I sent her an architect's drawing of the area and she placed all the grids so we put them up to her specifications."

Anne sees the art of collecting as a very purposeful pastime—one instilled in her by her parents and one she hopes her daughters will follow. At present they are busy collecting horse-show ribbons; all five daughters are active equestriennes. "When you develop an interest, it just adds dimension. Then when you are older and traveling around, you have something to look for, something fun to do." The entire family enjoys collecting picture frames, which appear on almost every flat surface in the house and are quickly filled with smiling Anka faces. □

Editor: Marilyn Schafer



THE BENEVOLENT TOWER

For their writer friends, Diana and George Melly's twelfth-century house in Wales has special powers

BY ALISON LURIE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER SYKES



Often houses that have been lived in for many years acquire a distinct personality. Whether or not they have a "ghost" in the strict sense of the word, they are haunted by a mood, a presence. The more ancient the building, the stronger this presence. The Tower, Scethrog—which is listed in guidebooks as the oldest inhabited structure in Wales—has this quality: it seems, according to visitors, both watchful and benign.

In part this impression may be due to its history. The Tower was built, most probably in the last years of the twelfth century, by some Norman or English lord who had come into Wales to take up land and establish a great estate, driving the natives back into the hills. It probably sheltered armed knights from Brecon or Tretower Castle, and allowed sentries to keep watch over the rich valleys of the Usk River and the surrounding Brecon Hills from which Welsh raiding parties might come; perhaps it was also a stronghold for treasure. Today, seven hundred years later, it remains both sanctuary and watchtower; but now it most often shelters writers, including the current owners, Diana and George Melly. Mrs. Melly's

novels *The Girl in the Picture* and *The Goosefeather Bed* were written here; it was at The Tower that she and Francis Wyndham edited the letters of their late friend Jean Rhys, published this past spring. Mr. Melly, the well-known jazz player, comes here to work on his autobiography and to write essays and reviews on art, literature, and music. "The Tower is amazingly relaxing," he says. "I arrive from London in a state of jittery nerves, and in no time at all I'm like a contented animal."

Among the many writers who have lived and worked at The Tower are James Fox, author of *White Mischief,* and Bruce Chatwin, whose Hardyesque novel *On the Black Hill* takes place nearby. Arabella Boxer—who writes regularly on cooking for British *Vogue*—tried out many of the recipes for her last book, *The Wind in the Willows Country Cookbook,* in The Tower's old-fashioned kitchen, with its stone sink, coal stove, and immense farmhouse table. "It's an incredibly restful place," Lady Arabella says. "It has a strange sort of stillness about it; going there is like being a child again."

According to local antiquarians the original fort that is now The Tower was at least four stories tall, perhaps more. The Usk once ran directly under its walls, and it was surrounded by a deep moat. Even today the house is sometimes cut off from the road by water during the winter floods. The ancient drawbridge is now in the museum at Swansea, but its mark can still be seen on the lichened gray walls, which are over six feet thick at the base and built of huge blocks of stone. Some of the upper windows are still fitted with the vertical wooden slats that protected its garrison from the arrows of the wild Welsh tribesmen.

In the seventeenth century, when the danger of armed attack was over, The Tower was converted into a dwelling house; much of the remaining interior construction dates from this period. In the latter part of the century it was inhabited by a cousin of the visionary poet Henry Vaughan. Vaughan himself, who was known as "the Swan of the Usk," was born in the parish, and in 1689 he moved with his wife to a cottage in the next field along the river, to which he composed two odes, one in Latin. He often visited The Tower.

Over the next two hundred years the history of the house is obscure; but by 1973, though still inhabited, it had become a near ruin. Its ancient walled garden was an impenetrable tangle of nettles, household rubbish, and briar rose; and it was without running water, electricity, gas, or modern plumbing. Inside, the ceilings had been lowered to save on heat and the space cut up with partitions into a warren of ugly, littered little rooms. Yet when Diana Melly first pushed open the great iron-bound door she knew at once that this would be her house. "It was as if I were under some spell," she says. "I turned to the estate agent and said, 'I'll have it.' "



The Mellys' stone Tower, *opposite,* is listed as the oldest inhabited structure in Wales. Guest bedroom, *above,* where writers Bruce Chatwin and James Fox have stayed and worked. Chatwin's 1983 novel, *On The Black Hill,* took place nearby.

To restore The Tower to something like its early condition and at the same time make it a comfortable place to live demanded courage, patience, and imagination. After the jerry-built construction had been ripped out, ten layers of wallpaper had to be scraped off to expose the medieval stonework and the ancient oak beams. The beams themselves had been so blackened and fossilized by centuries of smoke that it was almost as impossible to drive a nail into them as to drive one into the stone corbels upon which they rest. But exciting discoveries were also made: secret recesses in the walls, a winding stone stair blocked off for hundreds of years.

As far as possible, The Tower was restored to its original design. It now again contains three great high-ceilinged rooms, one above the other. The lowest of these is sitting room, dining room, and kitchen; above it is the master bedroom, and at the top the gabled and skylit tower room where guests may sleep and work undisturbed. A second guest bedroom occupies part of the ancient stone woodshed, and two bathrooms and a sleeping cubicle have been fitted into the thickness of the walls. *(Text continued on page 226)*







NEW YORK DIG

The Pompeii spirit lives again in the Tribeca loft of decorative painter Richard Gillette

BY HERBERT MUSCHAMP
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE WOLF

Late afternoon light pours in on Richard Gillette's tribute to The Last Days of Tribeca, *left.* In the excavated ruins of ancient Pompeii, Gillette has found a stylistic analogue for a changing New York neighborhood and for the rediscovery of applied ornament after the era of modern Minimalism. *Above:* Beyond the rim of a cast-stone garden table, a detail of Gillette's trompe-l'oeil floor of inlaid marble adapted from an unearthed Pompeian villa.

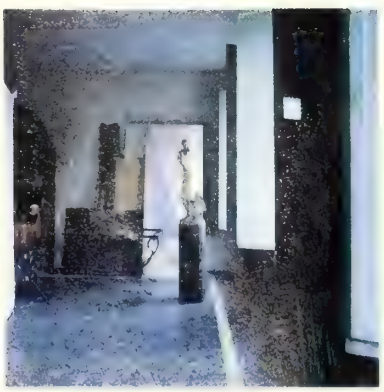


Beneath a wall of marbleized bathroom tile that Gillette shattered with a hammer to "expose" a crumbling Roman mural, *right,* even the kitchen sink is thrown into the period-overlay scheme. The hanging light fixture, which recalls an antique alabaster lamp, is actually a glass Art Deco relic from the main floor at Macy's. *Above:* Nourishment for a master of painted illusion: real marble, real alabaster, edible Bosc pears.





The "bedroom," *opposite,* is raised on painted plywood steps to allow a view of the Hudson River at night. The "walls" are a pair of 300-year-old carved oak headboards from Brittany. "Roman pottery" at left is actually a set of fifties lamp bases found at a nearby discount outlet. *Above:* Atop a marble boomerang table from the fifties, an inscribed fan picture from a Diaghilev dancer is flanked by a genuine Roman amphora and a 300-year-old marble mortar from France. *Below:* Stacks of recently commissioned decorative panels form a changing backdrop for an Italian cast-stone sculpture from the twenties. Steel shutters have the finish of weathered copper.



Tribeca is a Manhattan district prized by urban archaeologists for its decaying nineteenth-century piers and lofts built on top of buried remnants of pre-Revolutionary New York. Just outside decorative painter Richard Gillette's window here, a team of excavators recently unearthed the remains of an eighteenth-century iron foundry beneath the rubble of a demolished warehouse. Inside his loft, Gillette displays artifacts from his own development as a master of painted finish. Where other loft dwellers simply take the plaster down from the walls to find exposed brick, Gillette has exposed his imagination on all the surfaces of his loft, balancing his wide-ranging historical tastes into compositions of improbable harmony.

Gillette originally leased the space ten years ago as a studio to execute his large decorative murals, often used as photographers' settings: arcadian vistas, free-form Cubist and Constructivist fantasies, figurative Art Deco panels. Four years ago he got impatient with the commute from his Park Avenue apartment; also attracted by a spectacular view of the Hudson River, Gillette moved into his studio. It was then that he began to concentrate on the Pompeian motifs that now predominate in the loft's whimsical layering of period styles.

Gillette was scarcely less excited about his "discovery" of Pompeii than the eighteenth-century excavators of the doomed Roman resort, mainly because he finds in his aesthetic expeditions a symbolic parallel between Pompeii and New York as capitals of pleasure and sophistication. He drives the parallel home most explicitly in a mural beside the loft's raised platform "bedroom": a nocturnal scene of the Campanian coast, its ghostly esplanade and galley present a historical-costume version of Gillette's view at night of the Hudson's piers

(Text continued on page 241)



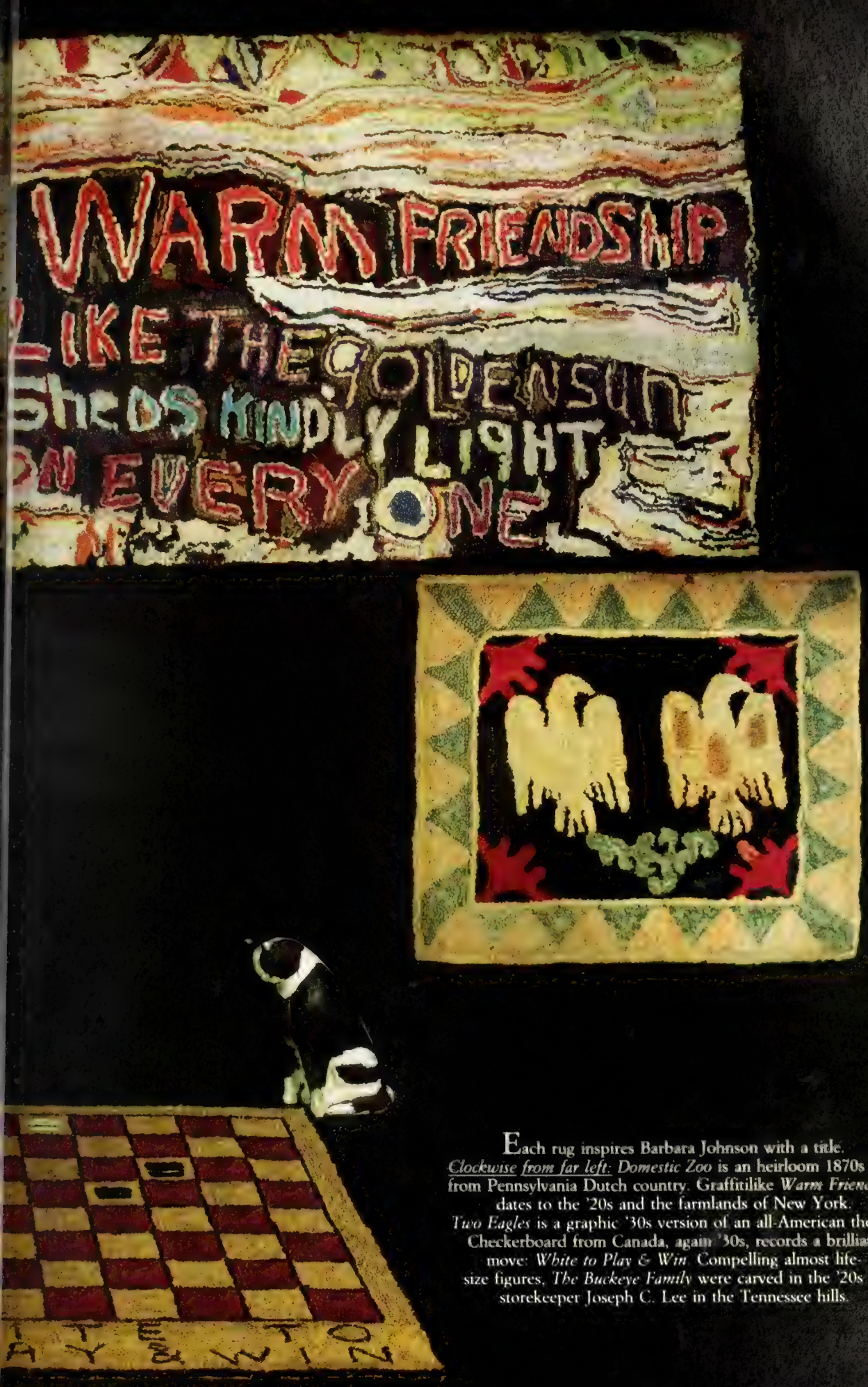


RICHNESS FROM RAGS

Folk art collector Barbara Johnson finds art in the humble hooked rug

BY JOAN LERRICK
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SUSAN WOOD



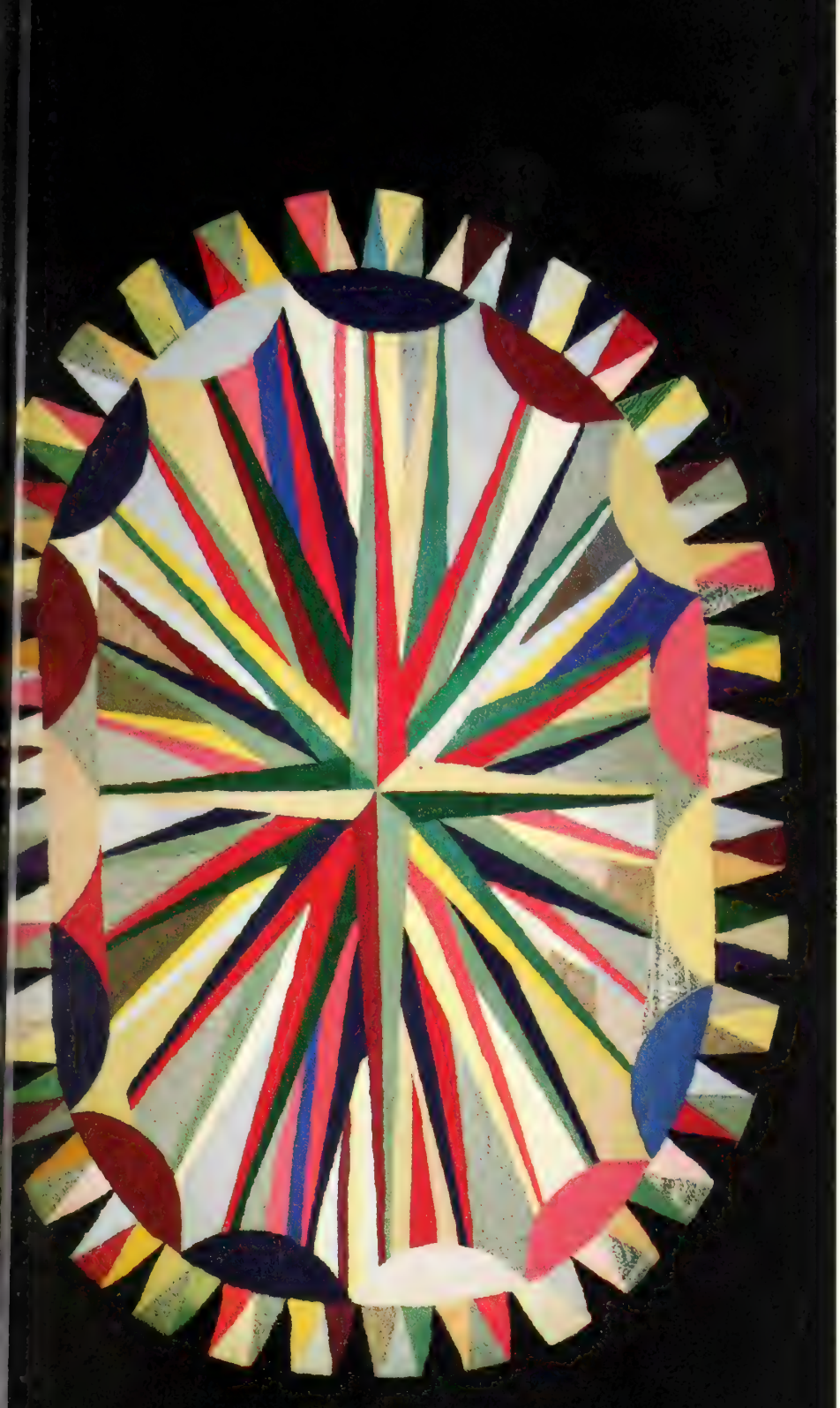


Each rug inspires Barbara Johnson with a title. *Clockwise from far left: Domestic Zoo* is an heirloom 1870s find from Pennsylvania Dutch country. Graffitilike *Warm Friendship* dates to the '20s and the farmlands of New York. *Two Eagles* is a graphic '30s version of an all-American theme. Checkerboard from Canada, again '30s, records a brilliant move: *White to Play & Win*. Compelling almost life-size figures, *The Buckeye Family* were carved in the '20s by storekeeper Joseph C. Lee in the Tennessee hills.









Abstracts are a strong force in Barbara Johnson's collection. *Clockwise from top left: Buck Rogers' Rug* foreshadows the rocket age, although crafted in the '20s. Intrigued by the mix of symbols and textures, Johnson named it after the first space cowboy. Hooked in the '30s by an Ohio family of the sect, *Mennonite* is an extravagant nine-foot oval. *Reflections in Red and Blue* is a '20s preview of Op Art dazzle.

As the whaling collection moved off, the rugs took on a life of their own." Barbara Johnson was looking back at her legendary assemblage of whaling memorabilia—recently dispersed in a multimillion-dollar series of sales at Sotheby's—and looking forward to her pursuit of the hooked rug, as an endangered art form fast vanishing under mud and the tread of heavy boots. The Swiss-born Princeton lawyer and supercharged trustee of the Museum of American Folk Art now numbers three hundred rugs in her reserves.

It is the dual aspect of the hooked rug—as primitive art and as naïve personal expression—that enchants. "Part of the charm is the anonymity," Johnson feels, yet many of these faceless country women, working with a frugal store of used sacks and scraps of old fabric, were endowed with a wry commentator's wit and a native painterly talent that elevates their humble floor mats into art.

As collector, Johnson has not "been hampered by the rules of antiquity" but relies instead on "gut and heart"; later, scholarship follows. With rugs, "it should be a real love affair" and she has bought "both very rich and very poor—some pieces with price no object, and forgotten little things that needed adoption." Expert dealers would concur that, since most rugs date only from the 1860s to the 1930s, date and provenance are far less significant than sheer design content.

How to preserve and display rugs is a subject of much soul-searching and she is disenchanted with current answers that frame rugs as paintings. "If you elevate a piece of art beyond its own ambition, you don't do it a favor," and she is now experimenting. One thing is certain: the solution will be one that museums will emulate. □



SQUIRE BY DESIGN

New Yorker Renny Reynolds re-creates an eighteenth-century ideal in Bucks County

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERNST BEADLE



Renny Reynolds's 1723–93 farmhouse, *opposite,* in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, has a new stone walk that he built and planted. *Top:* Renny based the duck-pond gazebo on old English examples. *Above:* Black-green and white barn in local tradition.







A cow, a pig, and a goat live here, along with two horses, two donkeys, eight sheep, four rabbits, a large flock of chickens, four dogs, dozens of barn cats, an ever-changing population of ducks and geese, and a chic Manhattan designer. The animals and their friend ramble about a 32-acre farm with a pond and a lake, gardens and fields and woods, seven outbuildings, and a stone farmhouse begun in 1723. In his other, city life, Renny Reynolds, master of this idyllic establishment, operates two New York flower shops called Renny and designs public settings and events using flowers, trees, and fountains.

It is only natural that a landscape architect whose professional creations are usually demolished the morning after their moment in the limelight would want some land on which to leave a more permanent mark. Having chosen Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for its gentle green hills and its stock of Colonial houses, Renny searched for two years before he drove up a long and winding road and came upon a classic vernacular house barely tampered with in two centuries. That day four years ago he entered into what he feels will be a lifelong commitment.

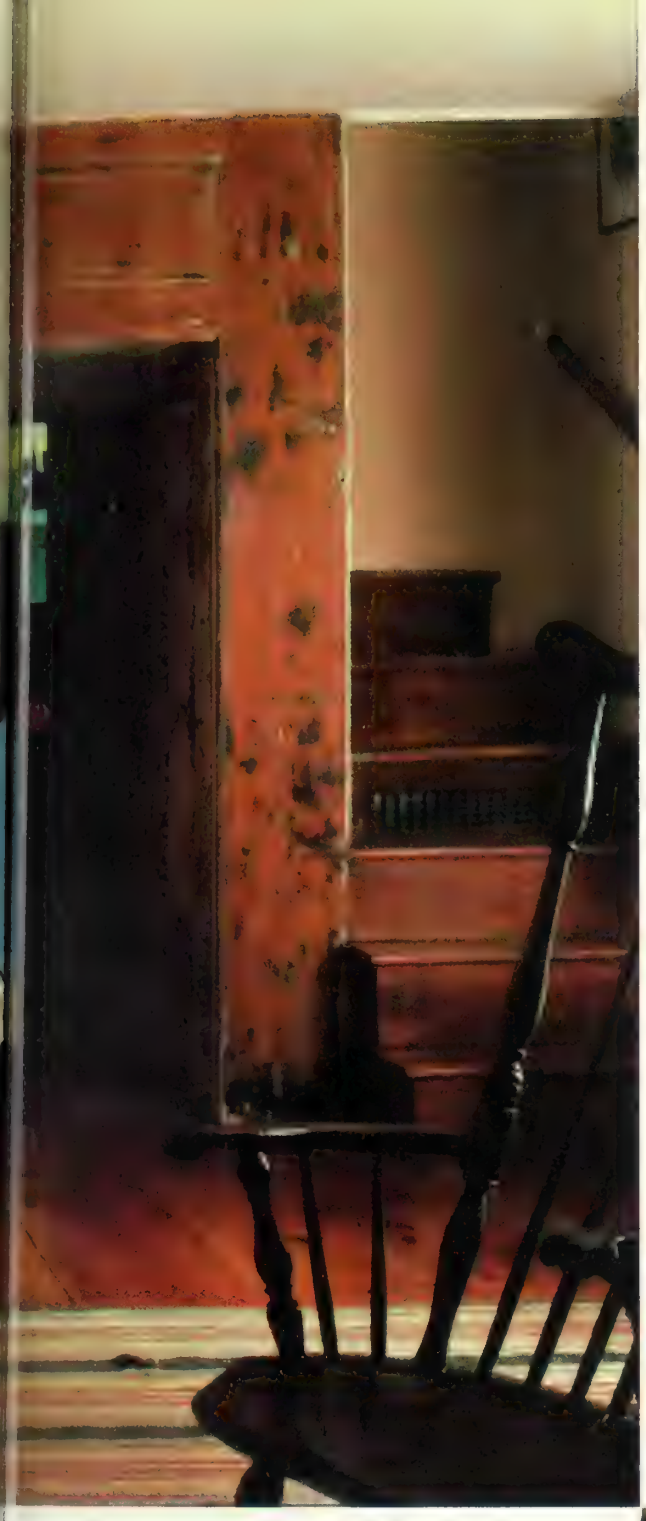
It will be a lifetime of work as well as pleasure, not that Renny makes a distinction between the two. Although he employs a couple who live on the property and look after the animals, this gentleman farmer is even more in-

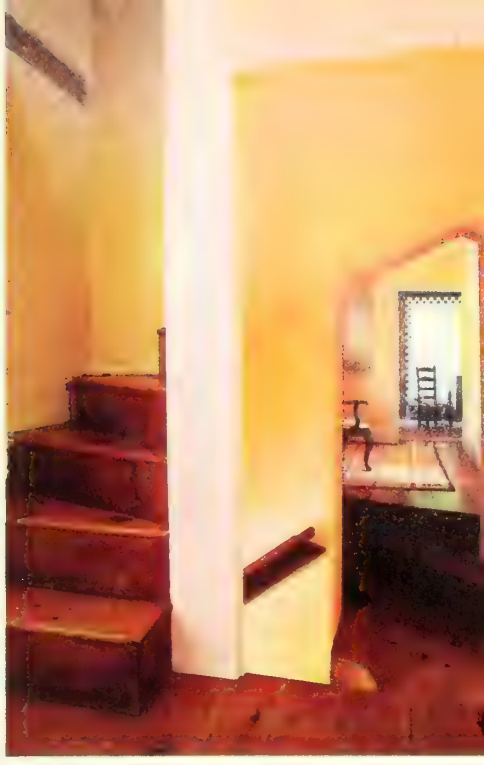




Used as a kitchen once upon a time, the dining room, *above,* has a cooking fireplace that includes a bread oven on the back wall. The original wide floorboards only needed cleaning and waxing, but many layers of paint had to be stripped from all the woodwork in the house. Eighteenth-century American chairs are gathered around a gate-leg table seven feet in diameter. Renny insists that guests be able to see over centerpieces. He likes generous plates, often using platters, and generous napkins, often using hand towels. *Left:* Renny Reynolds in the animal barn. *Right:* The house-long porch is a favorite summer room. Renny painted the wicker "a dirty green"—it needs a new coat every few years—and gave the floor its diamond pattern.







The double parlor, *left,* has a fireplace at each end and was undoubtedly two rooms originally. This was the only major architectural change Renny found in the more than 250-year-old house. Tall case clock is a Delaware Valley antique as old as its setting, and the Windsor chair is also Colonial American. *Opposite below:* Renny "played a lot" with the vast animal barn, basing its embellishments on what he saw in the area. Added were the cupola, once part of a Connecticut church, the Gothic-arch vents, the dovecote, and half the windows. *Above:* When the house was doubled in size in 1753, it gained a second stair, mirror-image to this one, and a second front door. *Below:* Another view of the double parlor. Sofa fabric from Clarence House; painted bamboo sculpture on wall by Keith Sonnier.



In Renny's own bedroom, *opposite,* he removed an ugly mantel that had not been original, preferring the expanse of plain plaster that surrounds the fireplace opening. The checked pattern also encircles the room's three plaster walls at the cornice line. *Above:* In the attic, a bedroom was made under a newly insulated ceiling. Beams are washed in light blue. Painted floor and repainted bed by Mark Allan. *Below:* Flowers bloom on almost every guest-room surface. Rose of Sharon quilt from The Pink House.



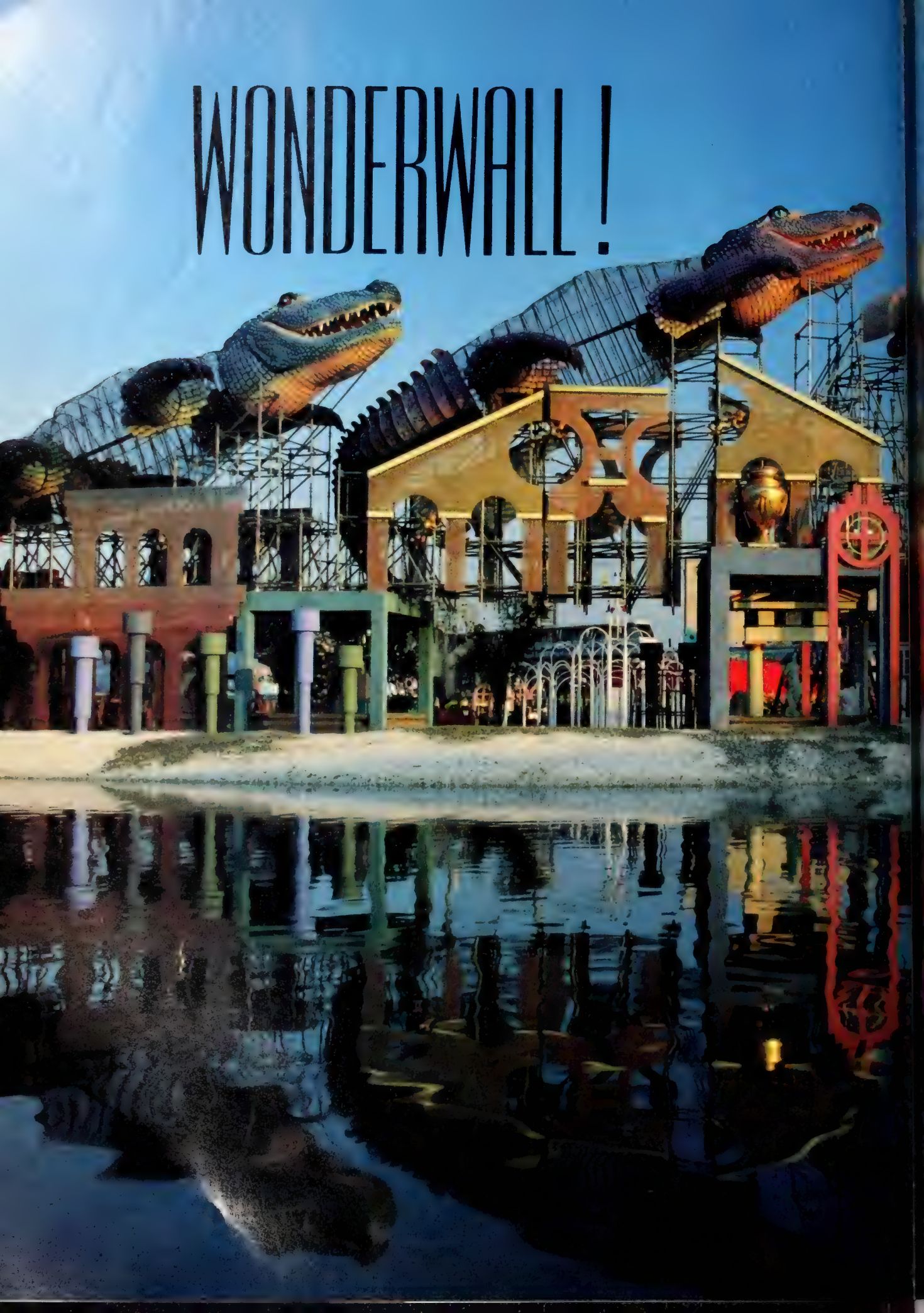
volved in maintaining and refining the farm than were the eighteenth-century landowners he so admires, Washington and Jefferson among them.

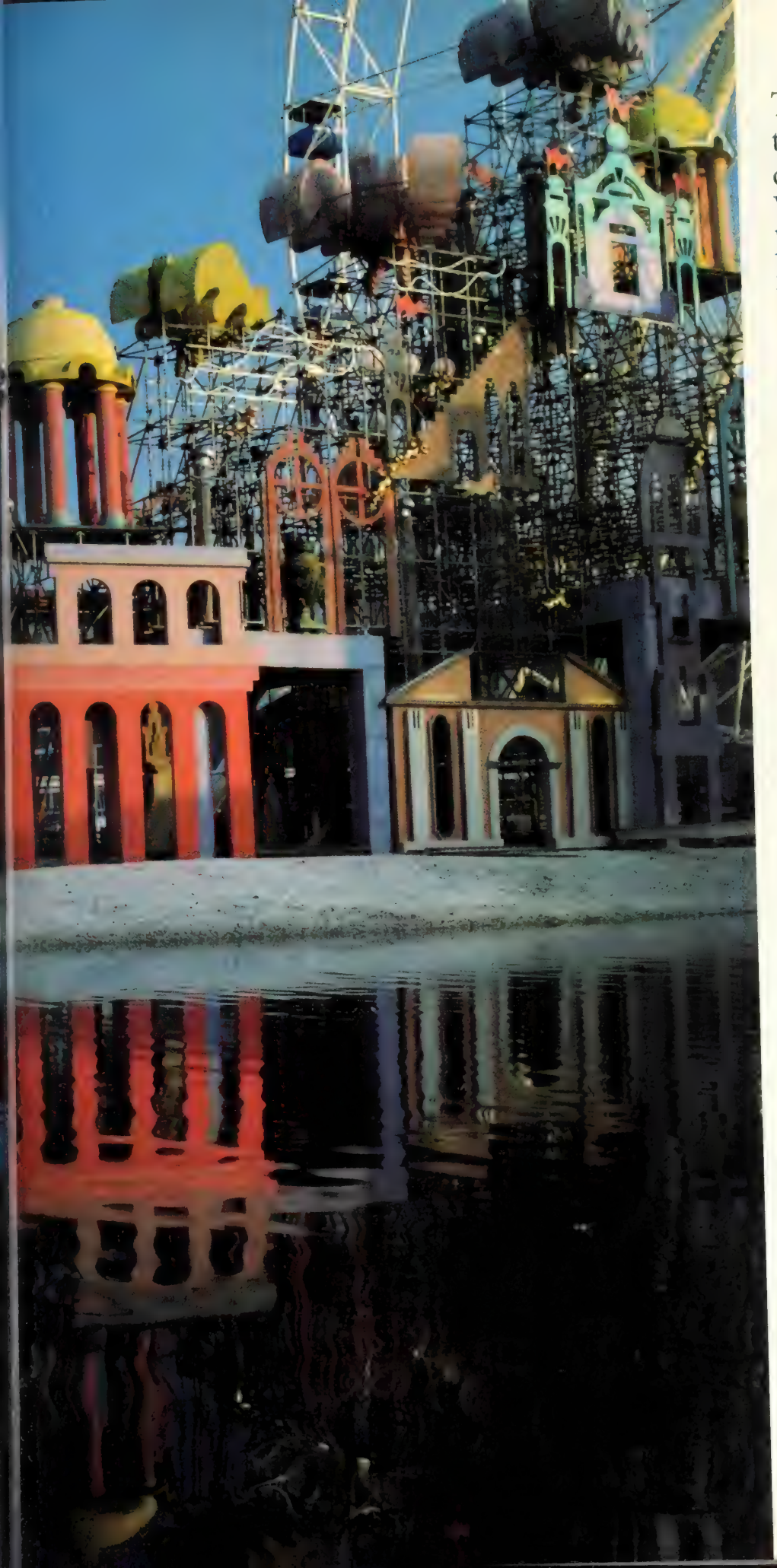
Renny works here as designer, contractor, and laborer. The first year he began by clearing dense vines and underbrush to make way for a kitchen garden, an orchard, an allée of perennial beds, and several single-plant gardens in which he masses ferns, irises, and peonies. Using old maps of his land, Renny found the location of a lost lake. He removed the trees on the site, bulldozed a bed, and allowed the choked springs and streams to fill it, to the delight of migrating waterfowl.

The seven outbuildings were not quite lost, since they remained standing, but Renny had to reroof them, mend and level floors, nudge posts back into plumb, replace glazing, and repaint. The house was sound and intact, possessing its original floors and windows, and here Renny's job was easier: to restore surfaces and to furnish in a manner that would be true to the building's place and period and comfortable for a hospitable owner who rarely spends a weekend without half-a-dozen house guests. Renny calls his business Design for Entertaining, but the term could easily be applied to his farm as well. □ *By Elaine Greene. Editor: Kaaren Parker Gray*



WONDERWALL!





This mad fantasy, the architectural hit of the New Orleans World's Fair, will live on as a vivid memory for millions

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN MADERE

Something there is indeed that loves a wall—and that includes the Wonder Wall, the hands-down architectural hit of the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans. Concocted by Perez Associates Architects with Charles Moore and William Turnbull as design consultants and Richard Peters as lighting consultant, it will continue to cast its magic spell until November 11, when the exposition closes and it will be dismantled. Many bedazzled admirers would love to see this crazy caprice remain part of the already rich New Orleans architectural experience. Built not for the ages but for a few months' fling in a benign climate, the Wonder Wall could indeed be reconstructed to last. But when such a thing was done, in 1965 with Bernard Maybeck's lath-and-plaster Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco (a relic of the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition), a great deal of the structure's original charm was lost. Better, perhaps, that the Wonder Wall should retain the kind of legendary allure in memory that few structures can ever live up to in posterity. □ *By Martin Filler. Editor: Heather Smith MacIsaac*





LIGHT AND LAVISH

Architect Bernard J. Harrison and designer Carolyn Guttilla give the favorite furnishings of a couple's life an illuminating new setting

BY MARGARET MORSE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO

In the garden room, the walls wear a white-on-yellow strié glaze. Subdued upholstery fabric (such as the Canovas check) lets the green landscape shine in, without competition, through three walls of French doors. The vista here is a water-lily pool. Patterson, Flynn & Martin rug. Accessories from John Rosselli.



The corner of the living room, *above,* has an Italian inlaid fruitwood table that belonged to Mrs. Lewis's mother. A braided ficus—and espaliers and topiaries outdoors—reveal a fondness for artful trees. Cowtan & Tout cushion fabric. *Opposite:* A table skirted in Fonthill chintz overlooks a neighbor's pool and tennis pavilion. Chairs, plates, and swan from John Rosselli; the napkins, Henri Bendel.

Various American places have provided hospitable addresses for Mr. and Mrs. Henry Lewis III, most recently Long Island. When verdant local acreage became available on what was once an estate, they decided it was time at last to have a house built to order—smaller than their previous houses but with the same gracious proportions. They turned to architect Bernard J. Harrison, a friend since prep school of Mr. Lewis (in the fifties a national polo player) and to interior designer Carolyn Guttilla, whose work Mrs. Lewis had admired at a showhouse: the mix of pale colors, plain chintzes, and durrie rugs convinced Mrs. Lewis that this soft rendition of modern could provide a fresh but sympathetic background for the Lewises' antiques.

Outside, the house is an amalgam of Georgian Irish and Palladian, with a nod to Barbados great houses. A wide center hall separates the public areas from the private—the kitchen, library, and large garden room on one side, the master bedroom and dressing rooms and baths on the other. Upstairs is a guest suite. Since the Lewises like to eat at various windows in the house, they dispensed with a dining room. For sit-down dinner parties, tables are set up in the hall, which has closets for silver, china, crystal, and linens as well as the folding furniture. Although the house is more formal than the Lewises' Rhode Island summer house, the hall is furnished as whimsically as a tea house: balloon chairs, bamboo settees, and botanical prints mingling with Coalport platters, which Mr. Lewis is fond of calling "Cole Porter's china." After we photographed the house, Mrs. Lewis and her daughter marbleized the hall's pilasters—a cream color to stand out against the white backboards. As Mrs. Lewis says, "I like the adventure of changing things." □ *Editor: Lynn Benton Morgan*





The glazed library, *above,* has a fireplace facing the sofa (in Rosa fabric from Fonthill) that is lit nearly every night. The double doors lead to a bar that opens onto the hall. Hepplewhite chairs are done in a Clarence House check. *Below:* The hall is lined with pilasters cut from columns of a former house in St. Louis and Nuage wallpaper from Clarence House. Pat Erlanger and Charlotte Flinn marbleized the floor.





When the Lewises eat breakfast in bed, they look out on a fountain. The birdcage—purely decorative (from John Rosselli)—typifies the indoor-outdoor feeling. Upholstered walls keep barks from the Lewises' dogs from interrupting a nap. Mohair throws from Mabel's. *Below:* A whirlpool bath screened by painted monkeys comprises half of Mrs. Lewis's dressing room. Ralph Lauren towels. An unseen detail: a converted spinet serves as the dressing table.





CHICAGO UNCONVENTION

Sculptors Howard Shapiro and Steve Mose collaborate with collectors Susan and Lewis Manilow on an unusual second home

BY DORIS SAATCHI PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY NICHOLS



A painting by German Georg Baselitz hangs next to a view of the Chicago skyline framed in one of the Thermopane windows. The stepped wall, required by the building code, derives from a platform Susan Manilow saw in an exhibition of David Smith sculpture.



A four-part painting by Mark Tansey shares a corner with a work by Robert Smithson, which is normally at the Museum of Contemporary Art on an extended loan. Above it is a photograph of the site from which the piece was taken.

The top floor of a nondescript nineteenth-century industrial building in a run-down area of Chicago so undistinguished that it doesn't even have a name would not be most Chicagoans' conventional ideal second home. For two natives of the city, the conversion possibilities of three adjoining dilapidated sweatshops fifteen minutes by car from their enormous Lake Shore Drive apartment was a dream come true.

When Susan and Lewis Manilow married eleven years ago, they combined not only their different but equally passionate interests in contemporary painting and sculpture, but also apparently endless supplies of stamina and enthusiasm. They can, and often do, visit museums, galleries, art fairs, and private homes all over America and Europe to see interesting work and still find time and energy between trips, as Susan Manilow recently did, to manage a friend's winning campaign for a ward committee post, while Lewis Manilow, over the past few years, has waged a fight of his own for the preservation and development of the downtown theater district and served as president of Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art, in addition to earning a living.

In 1981, when Lewis Manilow's term as Museum of Contemporary Art president ended, he and Susan began to buy works of contemporary art so enthusiastically that very soon the inevitable occurred and they ran out of wall space in their apartment. At about the same time, Lewis Manilow decided that he had spent long enough working in his law firm's downtown office and began to think about setting up a separate business base for himself. "I had bought a building," he recalls, "and a number of things came together. I felt less and less need to be down-



A horizontal painting, *Zwei Kerzen* by Gerhard Richter, is posed between two vertical windows, the two candles echoed by the pair of antennae rising from the top of the John Hancock Center in the distance.

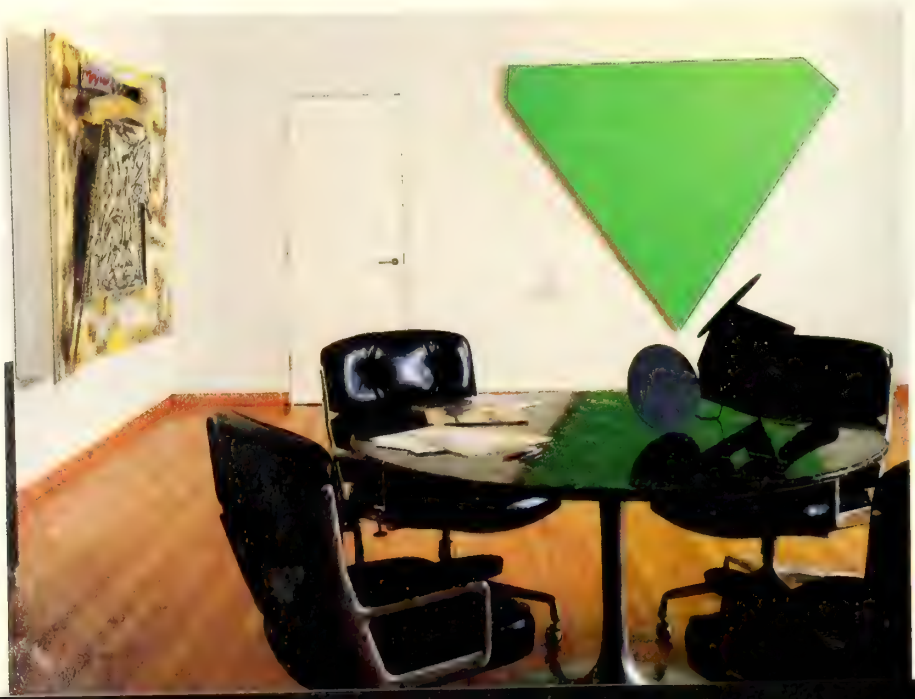
town and we found ourselves not buying pictures we very much wanted because we didn't have the space. And I was on the board of an art gallery that was being pushed out of its premises because they couldn't afford an increased rent. So I realized we could solve all these problems at once. We could have a space for our pictures, I could move my office to a better space for me, and I could provide a space for the Randolph Street Gallery where they could get themselves established for a couple of years."

The building that Lewis Manilow had bought was constructed in the 1870s on the ashes of the Chicago fire in what was once an important commercial street full of lively shops on the fringe of the city's great Polish neighborhood. After World War II, it had declined into an area of abandoned buildings and empty lots. "What helped us emotionally," says Susan Manilow, "was that there weren't people living here so we weren't moving people out. But I think it will rise again now that people like artists are beginning to come here to live and work."

Two of the first artists to come to work in the area were Howard Shapiro and Steve Mose who, with Susan Manilow acting as general contractor, made up the building team. "In the beginning, it was a mess," one of them recalls. "I mean, it was total rubble. You could see down to the basement from the top floor. So we knew we had to put in new floors, new walls, new windows, new roof, new everything. . . ."

Working from the ground up, they installed the Randolph Street Gallery in its new home with a two-year, rent-free arrangement and converted the second floor into two separate apartments which were then let to artists. According to Susan *(Text continued on page 225)*

Beside the staircase, *above*, is *Der Kettenraucher* (Chainsmoker) by Walter Dahn. To the right is Julian Schnabel's 1981 *Bones and Trumpets Rubbing Against Each Other to Infinity* and beyond Anselm Kiefer's woodcut *Grab des Unbekannten Maler* (Tomb of the Unknown Painter). *Below:* Stella's metal relief *Mysterious Bird of Ulieta* and Ellsworth Kelly's *Green*. Apart from the chairs, furniture was made by Howard Shapiro and Steve Mose.



In the foreground, *above,* is *Standing Stone Circle* by Richard Long. The chairs are a revived thirties design. The oiled and rubbed mahogany tabletop, *below,* on 6-inch-square specially cut limestone legs seats twelve comfortably, with views of a painted plaster portrait of *Andrea* by John Ahearn on the left, an untitled painting by Eric Fischl in the background, and *Vogel* by Gerhard Richter.





RESTORING
rooms in Newport by Ogden Codman Jr., the man who invented the woman who invented
DECORATING

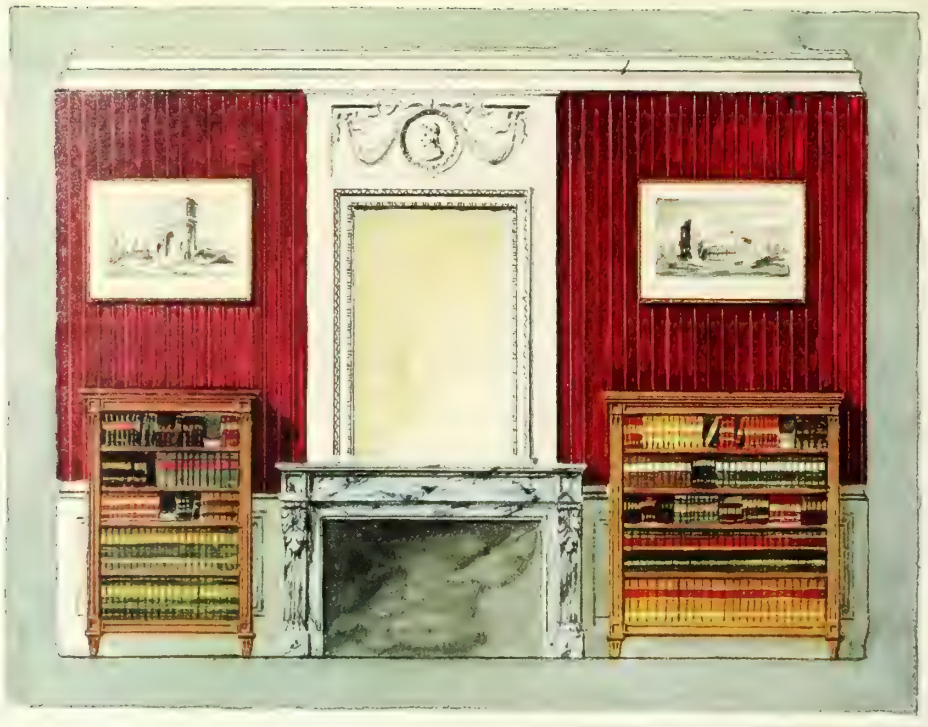
BY PAULINE C. METCALF
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI



The dressing table, *above,* in Mrs. Vanderbilt's room at The Breakers. *Left:* Ogden Codman Jr., circa 1880, a dapper youth posed in a photographer's studio in Dinard, France, where the Codman family lived between 1876–1884. *Opposite:* A watercolor rendering done for the dining-room addition, circa 1896, to the Nathaniel Thayer house in Newport, R.I., a Victorian cottage "classicized" by Codman, and one of his most elegant early schemes.

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART





THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

A watercolor rendering, *above,* done circa 1893 for Edith Wharton's library at Land's End in Newport, one of Codman's most important early commissions. The mirrored overmantel, with plaster decoration, and a marble fireplace were Codman's trademarks. *Opposite:* In Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's room, pink flowers ramble over an aubergine ground in one of the fabrics reproduced by F. Schumacher for the recent renovation of second-floor rooms at The Breakers.

On December 13, 1893, Ogden Codman Jr. wrote to his mother, "Who do you suppose I have for a client? Teddy Wharton told me today that Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt wants to see me at this office at 11:30 tomorrow to talk about doing his Newport house, and he wants me to do a part. Just think what a client!! The nicest and richest of them all. I can hardly believe it is true . . . I am going to thank Mrs. Wharton who brought this about." The commission to decorate thirteen bedrooms, dressing and bathrooms of the second and third floors of The Breakers, the last and grandest of the Newport "cottages" designed by Richard Morris Hunt between 1893–95, was the most important one to date for the "clever, young, Boston architect" (as Edith Wharton called him in her autobiography, *A Backward Glance,* 1934).

Ogden Codman Jr. was a talented architect and interior decorator who practiced mainly in Boston, Newport, and New York from the early 1890s through the first decades of the twentieth century. Although he did the complete design for 21 houses and remodeled a number of others, his work consisted for the most part in creating elegant interiors—notable for their lack of excessive opulence and oversize scale—for well-to-do, old-guard families of the Northeast. In Newport, Codman carried out fifteen commissions between 1892 and 1910—a period when the summer colony was in its Edwardian heyday. Despite the fact that his taste and style have had considerable influence on the traditional interpretation of interior decoration as used today, his name is relatively unknown except to decorating cognoscenti.

The recent renovation of the second-floor rooms at The Breakers (now owned by the Preservation Society of Newport County) provides us with an opportunity to reappraise these rooms in the true spirit with which they were designed. Due to the ephemeral nature of all interior decoration, it is most unusual to find a series of rooms whose décor and furnishings have not basically been altered since they were installed, except by the inevitable effects of time. To fully apprehend the "taste" and contribution of an individual designer has always been a most elusive task, and the re-creation of historic interiors remains a constant challenge to curators and architectural historians. In the case of Ogden Codman, thanks to his remarkably well-documented archives (including all letters, accounts, watercolor renderings, and architectural plans), it is possible to reconstruct not only the artistic and historical sources for his work, but also the social context and milieu for which they were done.

Born into a distinguished and cultured (but not tremendously rich) New England family, Codman began summering in Newport in 1890, opening an office at 18 Bellevue Avenue in 1893. After several years of minimal formal training, he had begun his professional career as an interior decorator in Boston in 1891, but shortly thereafter had moved his permanent office to New York. He had not forsaken his New England origins, but was shrewd enough *(Text continued on page 216)*





A guest room at The Breakers. By comparison to the public rooms of The Breakers, all of the bedrooms are refreshingly simple. The furniture, mantels, and *objets* were imported or made to order in France, usually copied or adapted from 18th-century models.





In Mrs. Vanderbilt's room, *above,* as in all the bedrooms in The Breakers, the furnishings are in complete accord with the requirements given in *The Decoration of Houses* for a boudoir: one or two comfortable chairs, a *lit de repos, below left*—"one of the most useful pieces of 18th-century furniture"—and, *below right,* a writing desk. In the window is a bronze model by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney for a monument at St. Nazaire. *Opposite:* Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's bedroom with a drypoint of her done by Paul Helleu about 1895.







"What I want is comfort . . . I always decide against poverty when I see very good bric-a-brac"

(Continued from page 210) to realize that a New York base was a better location to pursue a more rewarding clientele. Browns, Winthrops, Whartons, and Thayers were among Codman's earliest Newport clients—all Bostonian Brahmins to whom he was connected one way or another. Patronage of one's kin and social set was *de rigueur* among the small social elite there. Codman, however, as a member of the conservative New England set, was often disdainful of the newer arrivals in the summer community. While desirous, on one hand, to have the wealthiest clients to fulfill his professional ambitions, he referred to the manners and taste of some of the newcomers as "common." Codman's gossipy letters to his mother, who was living in France at the time, provide an amusing account of the discriminating attitudes of the young tastemaker. Referring to the house of an old Boston friend, Tom Cushing, he says: "It is such an ugly house, and shabby, not touched since it was built, but it looks like a gentleman's house, which is more than most do here."

The most notable person among Codman's early Newport clients and the one most responsible for his future success was Edith Wharton. Her friendship and patronage were of invaluable assistance to him in launching his career (i.e., Cornelius Vanderbilt). Ultimately it would be through the association with her as co-author of *The Decoration of Houses* (published in 1897) that his name would be primarily remembered. As she described in her autobiography, it was during the process of transforming Land's End—"to give a certain dignity" to "an ugly wooden house with half an acre of rock and illimitable miles of Atlantic Ocean"—that she and Codman discovered that they shared many ideas of taste and decoration: "a dislike of sumptuary excesses" and that "interior decoration should be simple and architectural." The book, which is still the touchstone of classical taste in interior decoration, proclaimed that the treatment of the interior ought "to be based on right proportion, balance of door and window spacing, and simple unconfused lines . . . not a branch of dressmaking." While Edith Wharton's crisp prose gave the book its style, much of the historical and factual material can probably be attributed to Ogden Codman, including the selection of illustrations showing the most of splendid rooms in the great palaces and country houses of Europe.

In addition to their mutual ideas about taste and decoration, Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman shared other common bonds—not the least being commiseration with one another on the "dullness" of most Newport society, concern for good cuisine, and an overwhelming love and appreciation for the atmosphere and culture in Europe, primarily France. Both had spent formative years of their youth living abroad, a period which Edith Wharton referred to as "a happy misfortune which gave me the rest of my life, that background of beauty and old-established order." Ultimately both Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman spent the last twenty and thirty years of their respective lives in France.

The knowledge and understanding of European art and culture which was held by both the young authors certainly contributed to the self-confidence with which they prescribed the formula for suitable and appropriate decoration of houses. It is not surprising that Codman, having visited all the great palaces and residences of European nobility, felt himself sufficiently well-versed in their architecture and decoration to be able to translate the lifestyle and comforts of European aristocracy to the needs and aspirations of well-to-do Americans. Transposing the airs of nobility to Newport was not far from Codman's thoughts when he again wrote to his mother (on August 25, 1894), "Mr. Vanderbilt drove me down to *(Continued on page 220)*



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RESTORING NEWPORT ROOMS

(Continued from page 216) my office yesterday. It was much the same as driving with the Prince of Wales or a very good Duke."

Refinement and elegance are words which can easily be applied to the rooms at The Breakers. These rooms, recently rehung with fabrics reproduced from the originals by F. Schumacher, are remarkable for their fresh, understated appearance. With their mixture of cream-painted furniture, flowered cretonnes and chintzes, a blend of English and French detailing, these schemes set a precedent for generations of this style of decoration in America. If their appearance, to our eyes today, is reminiscent of deluxe hotel suites, it is to be remembered that these rooms predated the former by several years. The relative simplicity of these rooms is all the more evident by contrast to the flamboyant "Italian Renaissance" opulence of the rooms on the ground floor, which were decorated by the fashionable French firm of J. Allard et Fils, in conjunction with the architect, Richard Morris Hunt.

Hunt, who had already built a number of other houses for branches of the Vanderbilt family and had previously collaborated with Allard et Fils for their interior decoration, had little respect or tolerance for the schemes of the inexperienced and relatively untrained young man who wished to impose his ideas on the architect's original scheme. He warned Codman not "to follow in the footsteps of Gabriel" nor "to servilely copy French interiors." Many years later Codman wrote that he had carried out his commission for Mr. Vanderbilt with the assistance of a number of students from the École des Beaux-Arts, "who produced a really charming lot of designs," which were then taken over to London for Mr. Vanderbilt's approval.

Many beautiful color renderings were done for each of the rooms, sometimes with an overlay to give a choice of color or curtain design, the detailing of moldings and door surrounds carefully delineated as well as the pattern and design of the fabrics. The practice of providing each of his clients with many beautiful renderings was one that Codman appears to have done only through the 1890s. Apparently he heeded the advice of Mrs. Wharton that "it was perhaps poor policy to overwhelm your clients by the number of your water-colour designs but you are now firmly enough established to be less lavish in this respect." She constantly gave him advice about managing his clients and warned him that "when a man begins in any profession. . .he must offer the inducement of being reasonable in his charges." Subsequently the cooling in their friendship was due in large part to what she considered his too-high fees for his designs for The Mount, the house she built in Lenox, Massachusetts, in 1900.

Although the rooms at The Breakers are an early statement of Codman's style, they display many of the trademarks that would be associated with his work. In keeping with a predilection for all things French, especially from the period of the eighteenth century, most of the furniture, hardware, chimney pieces, and *objets* were imported or made to order in France



Codman at La Leopolda Villa in France

from such famous firms as Jansen et Compagnie. Various firms would send photographs and drawings of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century pieces of furniture and Codman would select the style, wood, and exact finish he wanted. In order to provide the client with the piece most precisely suited for the room, it was more expedient to have copies made from a model, although there was certainly no difficulty in purchasing antiques at the time.

One of the most noticeable features of the bedrooms is the overall use of cream-painted furniture covered with flowered or printed cotton fabrics. Derived from the French Louis XVI tradition of *(Continued on page 224)*

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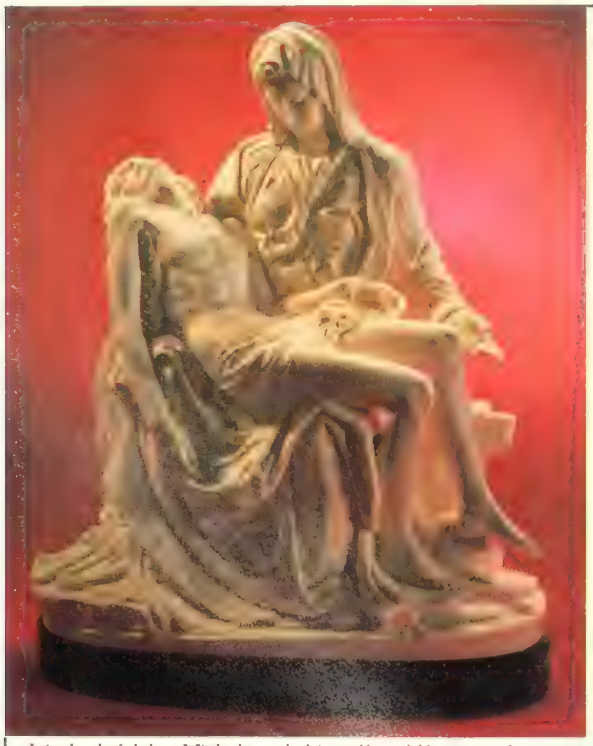
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RESTORING NEWPORT ROOMS

(Continued from page 220) painted furniture, this treatment is usually thought of as one of Elsie de Wolfe's trademarks. What is not generally appreciated is the extent to which Codman was the mentor, adviser, and source for many of her ideas on interior decoration. Beginning with her house on Irving Place, Elsie consulted Codman for the alterations and decorations of her various New York residences as well as the Villa Trianon, her house in Versailles. Undoubtedly Elsie de Wolfe's taste was similar to Codman's, and she had no qualms about the art of self-promotion.

The furnishings themselves used in the rooms are in complete accord with the requirements given in *The Decoration of Houses* for a boudoir—a writing desk, one or two pieces of comfortable chairs, and a *lit de repos* (as seen in the green-and-white room), "one of the most useful pieces of eighteenth-century furniture" which, "except in France, has been replaced by the clumsy upholstered lounge" (*The Decoration of Houses*). The use of toile de Jouy cottons for chair covers and curtains was another of Codman's trademarks also associated with Elsie de Wolfe. Although there are no toiles, specifically, in these rooms, most of the fabrics are of that type. Certainly, by comparison to most rooms of that day, which would have been overdraped and overstuffed with silks and brocades, these rooms are refreshingly simple.

The superabundance of pink flowers on an aubergine ground which predominates in Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney's room is quite unique for a Codman scheme, perhaps indicative that the client herself, a budding debutante at the time, was rather influential in the selection of the fabric.

It was said of Codman he often provided clients with splendid houses more tasteful than the clients, unaided, would have thought of wanting. The rooms at The Breakers are thoroughly tasteful—formal but gracious, classic yet comfortable, elegant without excess. Looking at these rooms, it is quite easy to agree with Ogden Codman when he says: "I hate shabby, dilapidated houses, and poor cooks, and all that sort of thing....What I want is comfort...I always decide against poverty when I see very good bric-a-brac." □ *Editor: Babs Simpson*

(Continued from page 205) Manilow, heir area, the six-thousand square feet of virtually clear space on the top floor, 'divided itself logically. The bearing walls had to stay. The only decisions we made were to put up divider walls for a bedroom in the back, for the two bathrooms, and for a small office in the front for the bookkeeper."

The remaining area is an L-shaped space measuring 120 feet on its longest leg. Sculptors Mose and Shapiro thought of it as a colossal, three-dimensional work of art and scaled every element accordingly. A stairway with cherrywood treads, designed by Howard Shapiro in tribute to his architectural hero Luis Barragán, leads in giant steps to the roof. The sofa, presented by a designer friend who couldn't find a client with a space big enough for it, will comfortably seat a whole family. Lewis Manilow can hold a conference around the five-by-seven-foot granite desk which Steve Mose devised for him to work at on his own.

The needs of the collection, which includes many extremely large paintings, determined some features more usually seen in public and commercial spaces. Very few private houses, for example, have an eleven-foot door leading straight outside on the third floor, used for works that won't fit into the existing freight elevator, such as an eleven-by-fourteen-foot painting by Paladino which was recently hoisted up and in on pulleys and cables hired specially for the job. Or a forty-ton unit that sits on the roof like a little house providing temperature and humidity control, a necessary precaution in a climate like that of Chicago, which can change dramatically overnight. Or halogen tungsten lighting on ceiling tracks.

Details have received the same attention as the largest elements. The fireplace refers to the steel boxes of Minimalist sculptor Donald Judd and a bathroom light fixture designed by Howard Shapiro recalls Dan Flavin's neon artworks. The monumental look of the dining table, with its eleven-and-a-half-foot long, three-inch thick mahogany top set on chunky limestone legs, is based on a table in Chicago's Art Institute which holds a permanent display of Brancusi sculpture.

With so many accommodations to art and (Continued on page 226)

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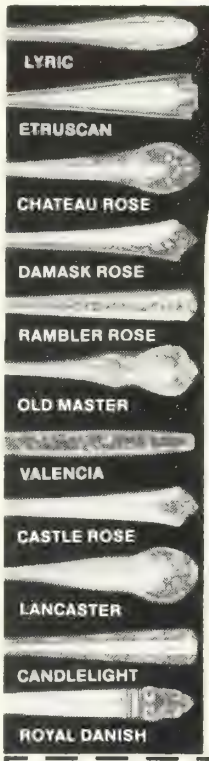
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CHICAGO UNCONVENTION

(Continued from page 225) artistic references, the space might easily have ended up a hushed and hallowed shrine to contemporary painting and sculpture isolated from the hustle-bustle of the workaday world. Instead, thanks to views of the extraordinary Chicago skyline from every window, the space is firmly attached to its city location. Inside, work begins at eight in the morning and with it the almost constant sounds of typewriter and telephone.

The kitchen is an integral part of the sitting and eating area, its plain-fronted Formica-laminate cupboards, commercial range, and island worktop designed for the informal kind of entertaining which the Manilows prefer. "I finally got my dream kitchen," says Susan Manilow. "I love to cook and unlike our traditional apartment where the kitchen is miles away from where everybody is normally sitting, I'm right here with everybody while I cook." Decisions as to which place the Manilows use for entertaining are usually made on the spur of the moment. "Certainly if there are people who are really interested in contemporary art and haven't seen this place, we come here," says Lewis Manilow.

Susan and Lewis Manilow haven't decided what to call their new space, sometimes referring to it as the office and at other times the loft. It can't be classified as either, though it is both, as well as gallery and guesthouse. Unconventional as it is, for an adventurous Chicago couple, it is obviously an ideal second home. □ *Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet*

THE BENEVOLENT TOWER

(Continued from page 175) All these rooms have been stripped down to the original stone and then plastered white. They are furnished in a remarkable combination of old and new, exotic and native, luxury and simplicity. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century tables and chairs and cupboards discovered at local farmhouse sales rest on rugs from Persia and Morocco; a High-Victorian brass bed is covered with an embroidered Indian spread; two matching early-nineteenth-century Gothic bookcases are filled with books on contemporary and surrealist art; a word processor sits next to a witch's iron cauldron filled with flowers. Somehow they all look perfectly at home; as Diana Melly says, The Tower can assimilate anything.

From outside there is almost no sign of the eclectic variety within. The Tower is a listed historic building, and visible alterations to the structure are forbidden: the house looks almost exactly as it must have in the seventeenth century. Diana Melly has restored the garden without modernizing it. Ancient climbing roses, pink and white, bloom in profusion along the old brick walls, and many of the fruit trees, skillfully pruned, have begun to flower and bear again, notably plum and crab apple. In the rich valley soil, sheltered from the wind, every variety of vegetable and herb flourishes: 44 species at the last count. Each year the masses of soft fruit—gooseberries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, and currants, among others—are transformed into pies, preserves, and wines. Diana Melly also makes delicious wines from rhubarb and from wild flowers, as well as remarkable elderflower champagne and blackcurrant cassis.

For George Melly much of the attraction of the house is its location on the Usk, which is famous for its wild, not stocked, trout. In 1982 Mr. Melly bought the fishing rights to one-and-a-quarter miles of the river behind The Tower, and he comes down as often as he can during the season. "It's a very, very good river for a fisherman, the Usk," he told me. "Some of the trout in it are up to five or six pounds, but most of the big ones are too old and wise to be caught. Those I take are usually under two pounds." He prefers wet-fly fishing ("I find it much more exciting"), and uses a Graphite rod ("absolutely amazing in its flexibility"). His most successful flies have been the black butcher, the greenwell glory, and—early in the year—the march brown. He especially looks forward to the autumn, when there are salmon in the river, and is hoping to catch his first this year.



George Melly's puppet theater which sits in the living room of The Tower.

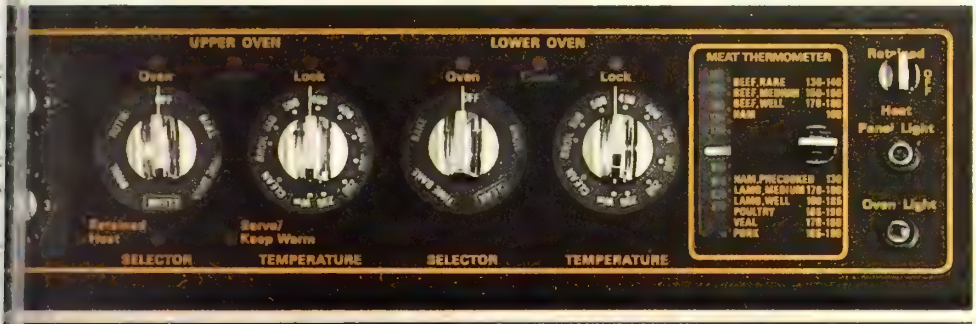
Some of the guests who come to stay with the Mellys also fish; others prefer simply to walk by the river or climb the surrounding hills. The Tower is within the Brecon Beacons National Park, and the 72 acres next to it along the Usk have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). According to the official proclamation, "The river Usk in a wide flood plain near Brecon has produced a wide range of wildlife habitats. . . that includes the old river channels, shingle banks, . . . *(Continued on page 229)*

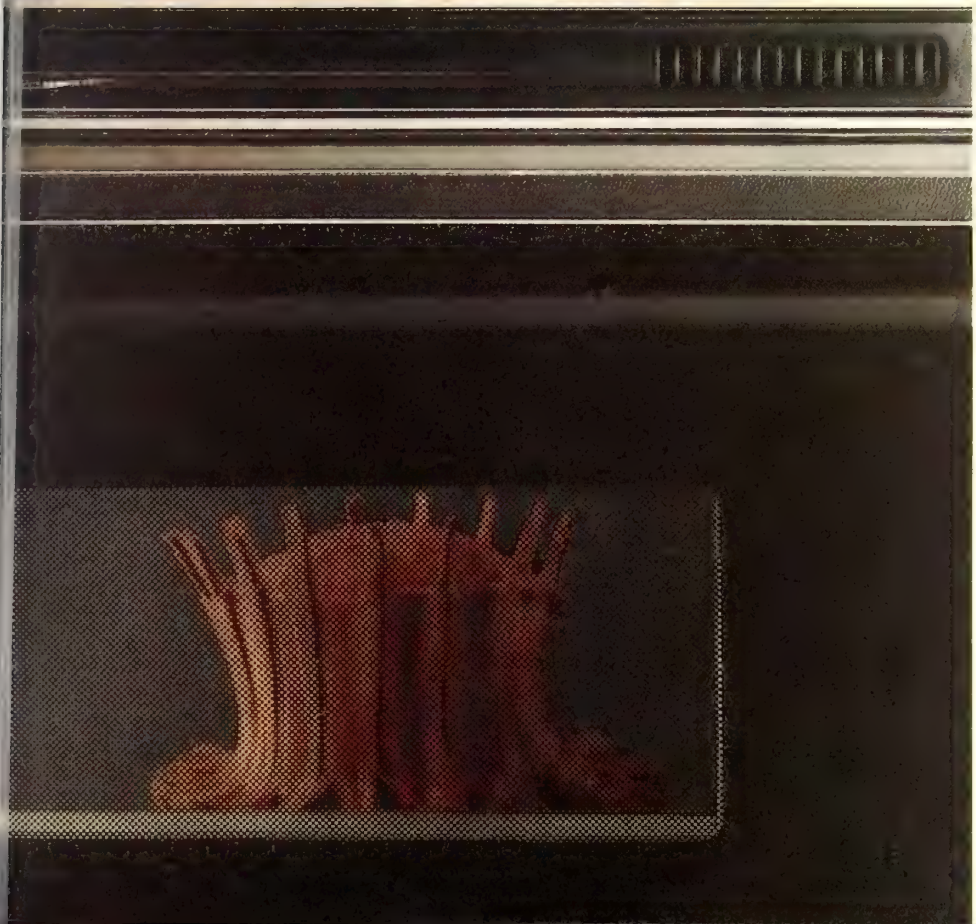
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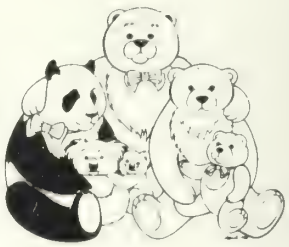
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THE BENEVOLENT TOWER

(Continued from page 226) eroding earth banks (providing sand martin nest sites), pools and riffles." These protected wetlands shelter rabbits, foxes, badgers, and hedgehogs, as well as wild mink whose ancestors escaped from a north Wales farm. Scarce species of bird, insect, and plant life flourish; there are five different kinds of willow and several rare wild flowers. In the autumn and winter the area becomes a wildlife refuge.

For those of the Melly's visitors who are professional writers, however, the great attraction of the house is as a place to work, in large part because of Diana Melly's gifts as a hostess. Everyone I spoke to praised her hospitality, her generosity, her tact with sometimes temperamental artists, her casually inspired cooking, and the intuitive sympathy of her criticism. When Bruce Chatwin, for instance, was writing his novel there, he would read his day's work aloud to her every evening. The atmosphere of the house is also very important. In the tower room, as James Fox says, "many a writer has broken his block." For him the building has "a mystical quality" that is somehow concentrated in the view to the west. If you look from The Tower in this direction you can see a bend of the river, the Brecon Hills, cows grazing, and a field containing a single central tree that seems, he says, to focus energy and weather around it.

Fanciful, perhaps. But it cannot be denied that in a sense The Tower has kept its psychological meaning over seven centuries. Today it gives writers both shelter and a vantage point from which to observe the world outside, just as it did the knights who lived there long ago. The poet Henry Vaughan's vision, in his Latin ode to the river Usk, seems to have come to pass:

"So divine's thy murmuring hymn
To these woodlands tall and dim
That I think I hear on thee
Orpheus' deep-drawn melody,
His sweet strings resounding clear
His ancient magic echoing here."*

*Translation by Edmund Blunden.

CORRECTION

In the July article on Los Angeles pools, the design of Sheldon Andelson's pool and house were attributed to Waldo Fernandez. They were designed by Warner and Gray.

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(Continued from page 151) that Lonnecker and Papademetriou pleasantly surprised the Strausses when they painted the exterior of the flat-roofed Modernist house in colors that referred back to the lot itself and to the Gulf Coast in general. Three stripes, blue-gray at the bottom, sea-green in the middle, and an aquamarine around the top, would also establish scale for the two-story house, and Papademetriou says that by being constant, the stripes would "play with the unusual changes in mass." The lowest blue-gray register would anchor the building to the ground while the central green stripe would become a nautical metaphor for the displacement line on cargo ships. Thus the house could become a kind of ship. And yet, the Strauss house, cool and serenely majestic, is an unusual ship to sail into those old Cajun backwaters. To Jean Lafitte's jaded pirate eyes it would have looked like The Good Ship Lollipop.

To today's eyes, the Strauss house is decidedly sophisticated and rational, with nothing of the staginess of a Shirley Temple vessel. Nonetheless, its real glory partakes of the youthful exuberance of that make-believe boat. The colors—blues and greens on the outside, lilac and lavenders on the inside—are full of energy and joy. The very existence of the house represents the triumph of the human spirit. The five years between 1977 and 1982, when the house was finished, were marred by tragedy in the Strauss family. Serious illness and the death of a son caused the house to be started and stopped several times. Finally, there came a time when the Strausses decided to forge ahead with it, and Mrs. Strauss began to sort through and dispose of the accumulations of a lifetime. The new house with its happy colors and its uncluttered spaces became a way of moving on, of looking optimistically toward the future.

Tom Lonnecker says that it is important to him and Papademetriou "to give clients what they want," an attitude that led to the successful give-and-take between the architects and the Strausses. For instance, the architects did not tell the Strausses what colors they should choose, but instead left behind with Mrs. Strauss a Pratt & Lambert fan of paint chips. Mrs. Strauss went through and clipped out the pinks and lilacs we see in the house. But, she says, "After I picked out all the colors, I left to Peter and Tom their final determination in the house." The two architects devised a way of turning the colors of the living room inside out in the gallery. Thus the colors of the recessed niches became wall colors, the wall colors retreated into the niches. And this only begins to suggest how meticulous their color calculations were to become.

In fact, the disposition of all the colors must be traced to the greenhouse/music room, which is open to the outside through a wall and ceiling of windows. Because the soft aquamarine of the exterior is particularly visible in the room, the architects brought it inside and then combined it with other colors. From there they worked a progression of six colors so that as they moved through the house one color would drop out and another would pick up. A punchier version of the aquamarine ties the major rooms of the house together, "occurring and recurring," says Mrs. Strauss, "like motifs in an opera."

For all the vibrancy of the hues, however, color never outdoes form. The gallery space, in a deceptively simple fashion, takes care of all the problems posed at the outset by the clients. It allows for public spaces on the first floor to be separate yet connected to the smaller private spaces and for the master suite on the second floor to be discrete and yet accessible to the grown children's suite of rooms. The gallery accommodates the three-foot drop-off of the land from one end of the house to the other with a subtle split level, a drop of a few stairs. And because the gallery is opened to the second level, it connects the house not only laterally but vertically as well.

But most impressive of all is this corridor's function as gallery space. By using glass block for the northern wall of the house, the architects knew that natural light would flow through the ambers and reds and pinky-purples of the antique pitchers and vases on the Strausses' display shelves, lighting them up and dazzling the beholder. Mr. Strauss is thrilled with the result and has told the architects that he now realizes, in a way he only partially understood before, just how brilliant the pieces of his collection are. □ *Editor: Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron*

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VANITY FAIR



RIVERVIEW TERRACE

A little-known street tucked behind New York's Sutton Place faces an uncertain fate

By Mary Ann Tighe

Riverview Terrace is an unlikely and probably unique piece of Manhattan real estate—a tiny cul-de-sac formed by six row houses, each only sixteen feet wide. On a secluded spot with grass, trees, and flowers growing directly over the FDR Drive, it also has a full view of the mighty Queensboro Bridge and the East River and is a mere five-minute walk from Bloomingdale's. In spite of its centrality, few New Yorkers are even aware that the street exists, since the only way to find it is to set out looking for it, and it continues to confuse taxi drivers, deliverymen, and postmen. But the residents of Riverview Terrace are more than willing to brook that confusion in exchange for their paradoxical New York City hideaway.

"Doesn't it remind you of the main street in Aix-en-Provence?" suggests one of Riverview Terrace's long-time residents. "It's like living in the country," says another. "You can walk in the garden and feel a kind of quietude you don't experience living in a high-rise. All of the owners pitch in—anyone who knows about gardening, for instance, works on that. We've got a real sense of community here because we're all interested in keeping our little piece of property private."

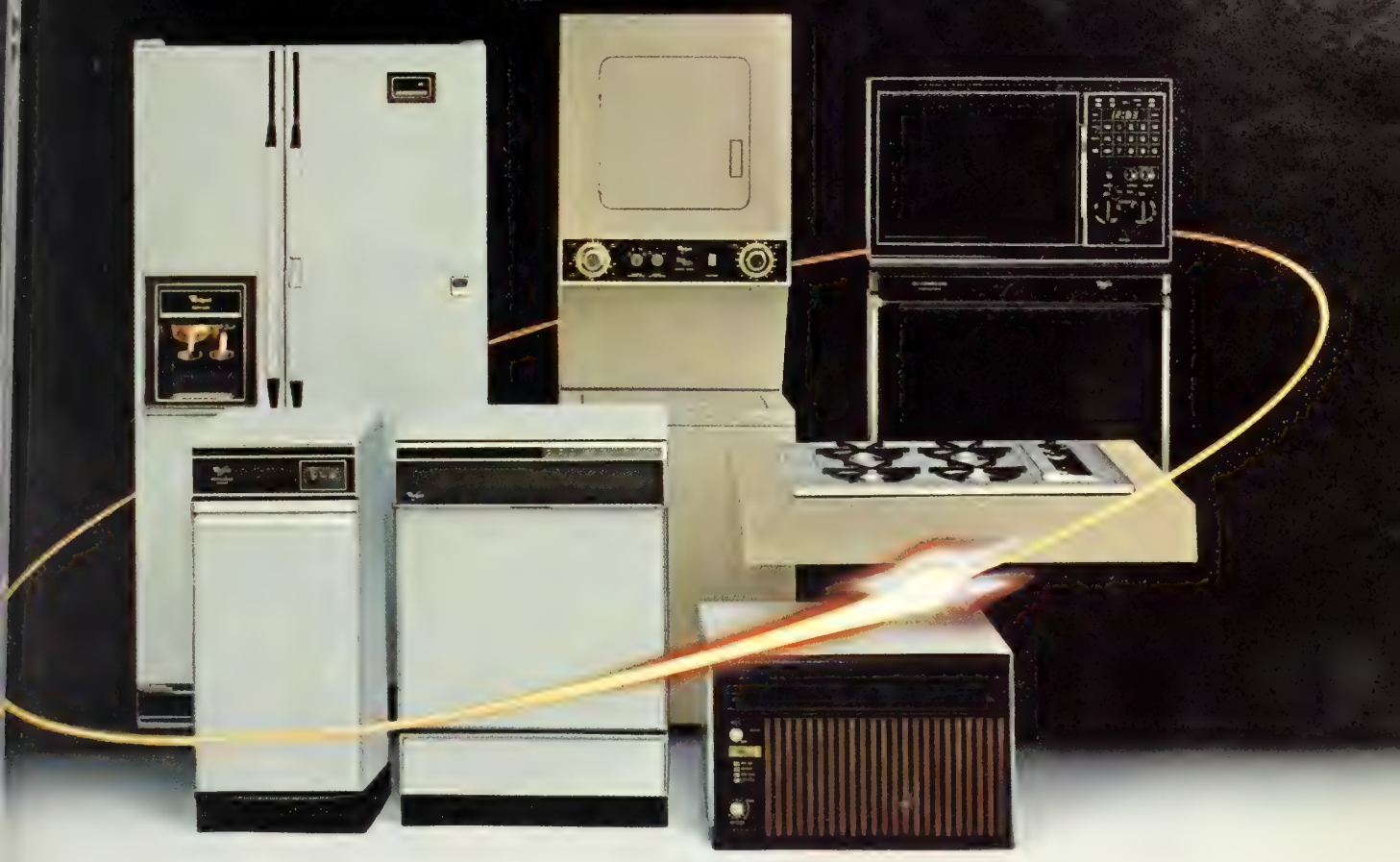
Tucked into a corner of the Sutton Place area, Riverview Terrace is reached by traveling east on 58th Street until the road ends at an iron railing that encloses a garden situated on a bluff high above the East River. By this point, signs have indicated that 58th Street has assumed the title Sutton Square, and this dignified name does seem apt for the elegant enclave. Sutton Place and the neighboring Beekman Place have been celebrated since the twenties as a midtown sanctuary for wealthy New Yorkers. And within this rarefied environment, Sutton Square is the most desirable spot. It consists of an unbroken row of town houses arranged as though along three sides of a rectangle, around a block-long common garden that faces on the river. The façades of Sutton Square houses vary in style from Georgian through Hollywood glitz, but all share a prosperous and well-tended look—an impression reinforced by the line-up of limousines to be seen there every weekday morning. Riverview Terrace, however, has a far more modest ambience; it is in, but not of, the Sutton Place area.

Above: The tiny street, which runs along the river, begins at the corner of Sutton Square.

Where the street ends at the northwest corner of Sutton Square, there is a small plaque affixed to an iron gate, reading "Private No Trespassing." The gateposts are each topped by a curious beast, *(Continued on page 239)*

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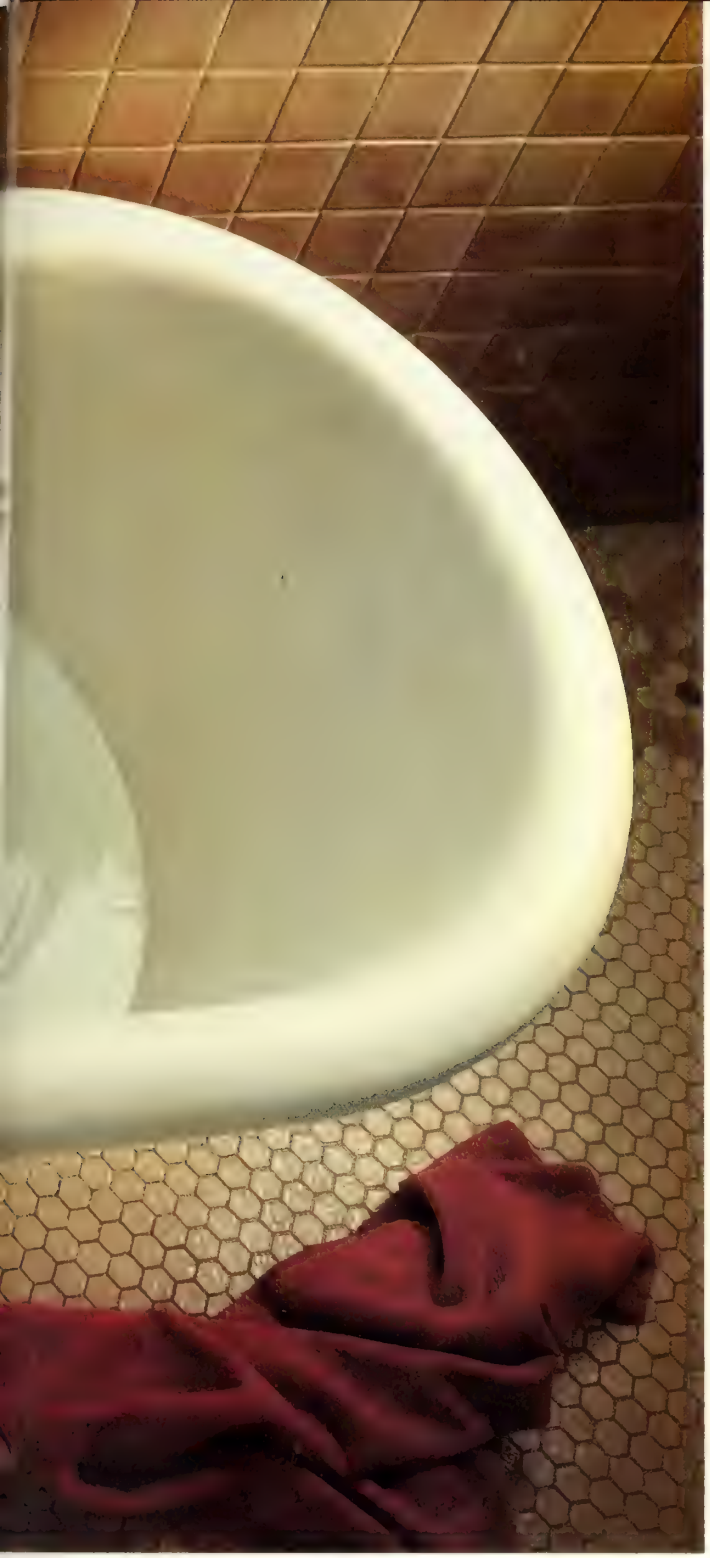
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4C

It is remarkable that this haven has survived the interest of developers for so long

(Continued from page 234) half goat, half fish, sculptures in poor repair, plaster falling away from the armature. They set the right tone for the street they guard, however, for Riverview Terrace is not so manicured as its neighbor, and, like its guardian figures, it has never fit neatly into any category, average houses in upper-crust territory, simple living on the city's most spectacular site. The buildings are, as one local has noted, "architecturally undistinguished," a reflection of their origin 106 years ago as houses built for middle-income New Yorkers. Today, however, Riverview Terrace is a rare vestige of single-family dwellings in an area zoned for high density. It is a magnet for developers, and prices reflect the high stakes at play here. At the moment, for example, one house on Riverview Terrace is for sale, furnished, at $3.3 million. Four years ago the house changed hands for over $1 million. Even with the extensive renovation of the property in 1982, that kind of jump in value is a direct reflection of the financial pressure being brought to bear on this homey sub-enclave.

The dollars involved in these transactions would certainly have startled Andrew J. Kerwin, the builder and real-estate operator who started construction in 1878 on a group of houses in this part of Manhattan, among them the Riverview Terrace row. For a time, he lived in the first of the brownstones; eventually, all were sold to solid, professional folk. Lawyers, decorators, and architects made up the first few generations of Riverview Terrace owners, in contrast to the rest of Sutton Place, in those years populated by civil servants, lower-level white-collar workers, and local business owners, most of whom rented. *The New York Times Magazine* description of the community in 1921 was true for the latter part of the nineteenth century as well. According to the *Times,* it was one of a "few little settlements . . . settled in the seventies by 'nice people' in modest circumstances, who were erratic enough to prefer a view of the river to a convenient horse car. . . ."

Through its first four decades, Riverview Terrace remained largely unchanged despite the turmoil New York City experienced from the massive influx of European immigrants. While Sutton Place went into a decline brought about by a high turnover among renters, Riverview Terrace enjoyed a more stable population. From 1885 through 1935, for example, row house Number 4 was occupied by the family of John Hyslop, a furnace manufacturer and yachtsman whose obituary pronounced him "the official measurer for the New York Yacht Club." Because of its privacy, its extraordinary vista, and a history of owner-occupants, the little group of six houses was untouched by the changing character of the adjacent streets. This was to hold true even when Sutton Place underwent a dramatic transformation.

In 1920, a syndicate headed by developer Eliot Cross, having observed the desirability of the views and the absence of traffic and crowds, bought up the group of neglected town houses that now forms the Sutton Square complex. Cross does not appear to have pursued the Riverview Terrace property because it would probably have been difficult to buy all six houses. On Sutton Square, however, the landlords must have been delighted at the opportunity to turn a profit on their dilapidated units. So, after purchasing the buildings and evicting the renters, Cross designed the Sutton Square complex, removing stoops from the façades, planting the common garden, and establishing a covenant that committed the owners to proper maintenance standards and to the use of the houses only as single-family residences.

Among the first people to whom Cross sold (whether by luck or calculation is unknown) was the celebrated decorator Elsie de Wolfe. In 1921, she renovated Number 13 Sutton Place and took up residence there with her companion Elisabeth Marbury, the theatrical agent. Together they established a salon that attracted some of the stars of New *(Continued on page 240)*

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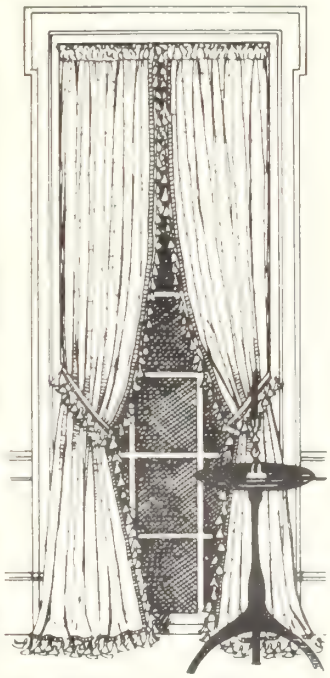
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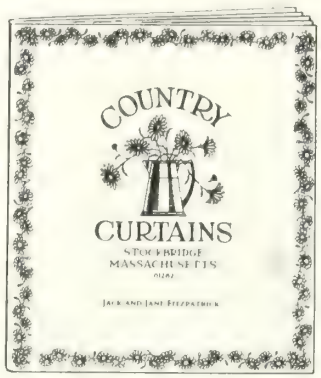


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BEST PLACES

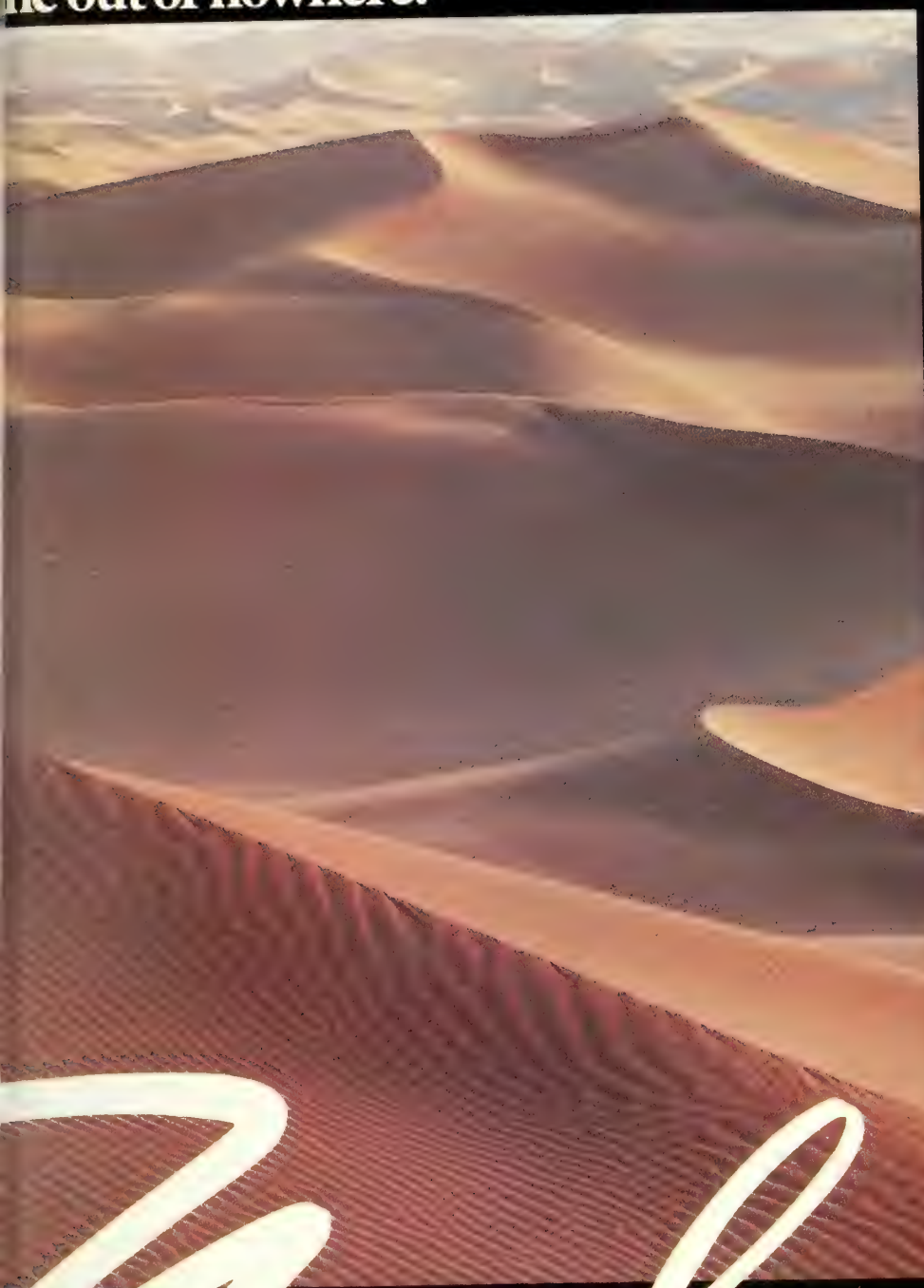
(Continued from page 239) York society. And in short order, the *Times* was making note of a "curious migration" with headlines that announced Mrs. W.K. Vanderbilt and Miss Anne Morgan had both bought homes on "Sutton Place, a little known two-block thoroughfare. . . ." The houses were sold for the considerable sums of $50,000 (Vanderbilt) and $75,000 (Morgan), and then the women spent several hundred thousand more on Elsie de Wolfe's renovations. Such doings transformed the area, which quickly became a magnet for the rich in quest of chic. It was a turning point in the city's housing history. For the first time, wealthy people were fixing up old houses rather than constructing new ones. By 1925, a thirteen-story co-op building was begun, and in the next few years $13 million was spent on fashionable apartment construction in a one-block radius.

Tiny Riverview Terrace remained impervious to the sudden success of the adjoining community. As the October 16, 1927, *New York Times Magazine* noted, "Certain families have been there for forty years and more. They turned their back on Sutton Place when it was dirty and disheveled and neglected, and they see no reason for changing their behavior now that it has grown fashionable."

But eventually, with the rise of real-estate values, Riverview Terrace did experience some changes. Number 5 has been altered by the addition of two balconies and another floor, breaking the serial effect created by its three-story neighbors. Number 6 has been most radically transformed. Its façade has been redone in concrete, albeit of the same soft brown color as the adjoining brownstones, and its complete absence of architectural detail, with most of the second-level wall surrendered to a large expanse of glass, suggests an attempt to assume the "style moderne." By comparison, the changes to Number 1 (since renumbered 7 Sutton Square) now with a neo-Federal façade, seem comparatively minor. But Numbers 2, 3, and 4 are fairly well intact, except for an air conditioner cut into a wall here or a torn old screen door there. The fine cornice work that crowns these three houses still testifies to the care of its builder, and the ivy climbing along the stones is enchant-

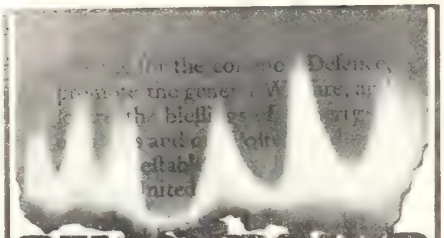
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CENSORSHIP

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NEW YORK DIG

(Continued from page 241) sensibility, which forges striking visual connections across time and place. Thus, his ancient Roman amphora is occasionally grouped with a set of fifties ceramic lamp bases from a nearby discount store. A French Empire candlestick illuminates a volume of thirties German photographs on top of a cast-stone garden table from the turn of the century.

In a corner of the loft, a shifting stack of recently commissioned flats for catalogues, record covers, and fashion spreads hint at newer interests, such as Bauhaus painter Oskar Schlemmer and Mexican Modernist Luis Barragán (in whose manner Gillette executed a "house" for a recent Bergdorf Goodman catalogue).

Gillette also likes to make individual objects play with the themes of composite and overlay. A French chrome torchère, treated by Gillette-colored acrylics to resemble long-buried bronze, could be an upended horn for announcing imperial arrivals at ancient Roman games. By Gillette's bed are two lamps fashioned in the twenties from a pair of nineteenth-century marble candlesticks; between the lamps hangs a turn-of-the-century American copy of an Italian Renaissance miniature. By the window is an Italian cast-stone sculpture of a disturbingly hybrid iconography: is it a Madonna and Child or Leda and the Swan?

The spell of Gillette's unique interior civilization is so strong that even the views from his window seem to enter into the theme. Across the street, a still-functioning warehouse recalls the Washington Market that once supplied the entire city with produce (Gillette's building provided storage for butter cookies). A cruise ship gliding down the Hudson at sunset is a hallucinatory flashback to the era of transatlantic liners. And to the far left, the steel frames of the rising Battery Park City complex, their construction lights twinkling in the dusk, reenact New York's most ancient pageant as a city that thrives on change. □

WHERE BEAUTY IS NOT A LUXURY

(Continued from page 132) to think that in 1930 an Egyptian couple had thought to ask an avant-garde architect to build their house rather than to buy an eighteenth-century château! The family was cultured and refined, and entertained a lot. So the first floor was dedicated to receiving friends and guests."

The garden, also designed by Perret, has a Mediterranean flavor with its magnolias and pines and trees in espaliers. Two square basins provide the freshness and joyful murmur of running water, and stepping terraces prolong the terraces of the house—the roof terrace and the first-floor terrace.

"It has belonged to only two owners: the Egyptian family and ourselves. The same spirit inhabits it. The bey was an inventor, and so am I," says Quasar.

Not only is the house itself magic, the Khanhs explain, but the way it was found is magic as well. They had a dream house in Montparnasse, and had no reason to move except that Quasar wanted to see the changing seasons and reveal the stars to their children Othello and Atlantique. In Paris, they missed nature. One day they chanced on an ad in the papers: a strange house for sale.

"On the telephone, I asked for three things: first, space—there was more than we could use; second, an exposure to the south—it's on a north-south axis on top of a hill called *les quatre vents* or the four winds; third, the right price—it was a bargain! The highest point in the Paris area cannot be found twice. So we went there right away, and it was like the house in *Sunset Boulevard*—an enormous, dilapidated, abandoned house. It may not have been for everyone, but it was for us!" said Quasar.

Though he had always dreamed of building his own house, he signed the check immediately. All the money in the world cannot reproduce certain things like the immense wooden doors that cannot be found anymore. When they realized, bewildered, that it was January 19, 1975, and that the address

f the house was 75 rue du 19 janvier, ıey knew for sure it was destiny at ork.

"I feel so good at home," says Quaar. "I never leave it. I work here. It is a amily house for all of us." Emmanelle can design or read as she wishes. No need to escape weekends, since it lready has a country flavor. Emmanelle has planted flowers for her bou-

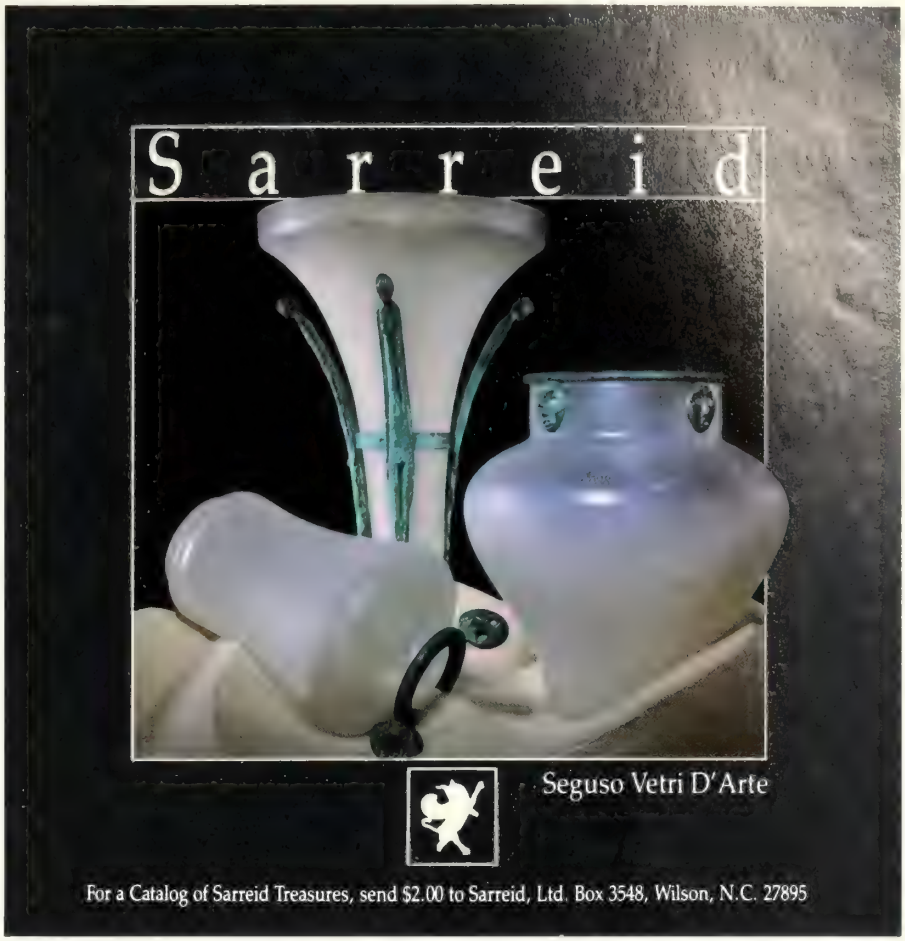
"I feel we are the natural heirs of this house. It was destiny in the best sense of the word. We made it alive again. We just changed the colors and restored it"

uets and she enjoys driving through ıe Bois de Boulogne to her new offices n the Avenue Victor Hugo.

"I have adapted to the house," she ays. "The northern façade reminds ıe of a city hall, whereas the southern ıçade is more charming. We've plantd a screen of shrubs to isolate us from ıe street. The exteriors are harsh and gorous, but there is great harmony inde. We never bought expensive furiture," she adds. "I haven't tried to e-create a 1930 ambience but put in bjects which didn't disturb the house nd which seemed to always have been ıere."

Children and friends come and go. offee is always ready, and always ietnamese food. When the weather ermits, lunch is outdoors. In the winr months, dinner is in the old-fashoned kitchen. When they entertain, it in the dining room filled with pink amingos found and collected by Emanuelle in California, and when there re more than fifty guests, candlelit tales are placed on the terrace.

One enters the house by the northrn façade through an entrance degned for the bey and his numerous ars. The Khanhs transformed the ather sad courtyard into a shady garen. The ground floor was a series of even or (*Continued on page 250*)



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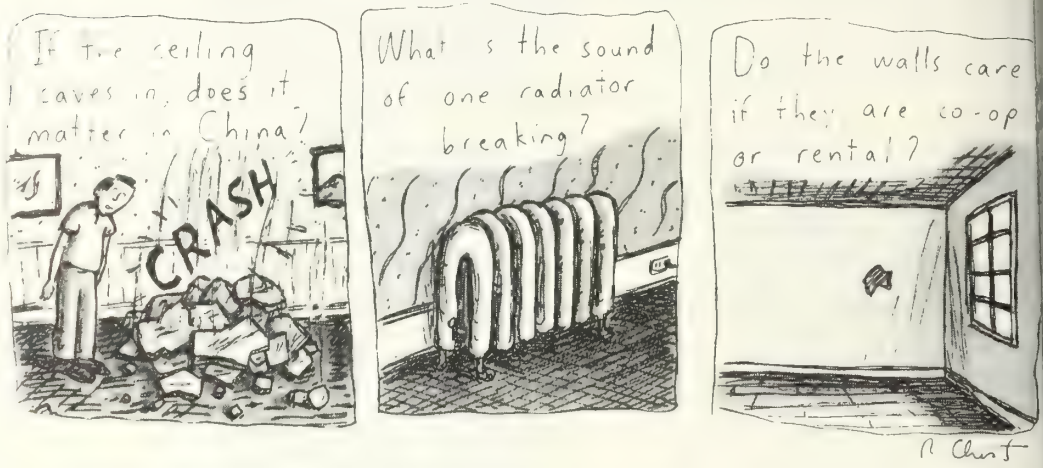
THE ETERNAL EDGAR

Degas. The Art Institute of Chicago. Through Sept. 23.

The 150th birthday of Edgar Degas (1834–1917) is the occasion for at least three major exhibits this year, in addition to this one in Chicago. Boston's



Museum of Fine Arts will show "Edgar Degas: The Painter as Printmaker" from Nov. 14 to Jan. 13, 1985; and from Nov. 22 to Mar. 10, 1985, one can see "Degas: The Dancers" at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. The Chicago show is the only one, however, that covers the full range of Degas's output, from paintings to pastels to sculpture, and from horse races to washerwomen to portraits *(above,* a detail from *Uncle and Niece* 1875–78). *Ann Priester*



THE SOUND OF ONE HAND LAUGHING

No more a mere cartoonist than Herman Melville was a writer of shipping notices, Roz Chast is the missing conscience of The Me Generation. The latest collection of her work, *Parallel Universes* (Harper & Row, $7.95), shows the gadfly of gentrification at her most incisive. She confronts the 3 PM of the soul ("Pick up dry cleaning... Defrost lamb chops...Call Marge"), asks probing questions ("Computer programmer or data stylist?"), celebrates the latest in accessories (The Tabletop Family—"They're smart and nice and very cute/Much better than a bowl of fruit"), and offers Zen for the eighties, *above. Martin Filler*

ARCH PRESERVER

Once they were ubiquitous: over ten billion burgers sold and over a thousand McDonald's stands built to the famous golden arches design between 1953 and 1968. But then Good Taste began to prevail, and the classic red-and-white striped tile models were replaced by mansarded banalities. Now fewer than twenty of the originals survive nationwide, and California architect Alan Hess has





ALAN HESS

begun a crusade to preserve these key artifacts of roadside Americana for future generations.

As part of his effort, he has nominated the oldest one extant, *above* (Downey, Calif., 1953), to The National Register of Historic Places. But his enthusiasm for the building type transcends brand loyalty, and he is also fighting to save Ship's, *detail left,* a 1958 drive-in beauty on L.A.'s Wilshire Boulevard, threatened with demolition to make way for yet another highrise on that increasingly claustrophobic corridor. Hess does it all for *you. M.F.*

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RESURRECTING WRIGHT

The destruction of significant works of architecture is all too common these days, even if a building enjoys the aura of historic importance. So interest ran high when it was revealed that a house by Frank Lloyd Wright—or rather the pieces of it—had been "rediscovered" in the basement of a former Wright apprentice near New York City, where they had languished for almost thirty years.

The structure, *below,* built in 1953 as part of an exhibition held on the site of what is now the Guggenheim Museum in New York, was sold as part of a TV design auction to benefit New York's Channel 13. Few observers had expected the presale estimate of $50,000 to be exceeded, considering that it will cost another $250,000 to have the components reassembled, not including land. Thus the final sale price of $117,500 puts this surprise survivor into the realm of a world's record, especially since Wright houses in the Midwest still go for a great deal less than that total. But this house has one thing that they do not: portability. And that will come in handy for its new owner, Michigan businessman Tom Monaghan, who plans to reerect it as a museum in his hometown of Ann Arbor. *M.F.*





PLASTIC IN ITS PRIME

Spurned not long ago as archetypically tacky, plastic now enjoys a new vogue among collectors who recognize that much of it (like the thirties toucan tape dispenser, *above*) is of superior design. This and 249 other choice specimens are in *Art Plastic: Designed for Living* by Andrea DiNoto (Abbeville, $45).

THE SMITHSONIAN GOES UNDERGROUND

America's museum boom might have nowhere to go but up; on the Mall in Washington, D.C., however, it was wisely decided that there was nowhere to go but down. The Smithsonian Institution's new Center for African, Near Eastern and Asian Cultures was skillfully designed by the Boston architectural firm of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott (under Jean Paul Carlhian's direction) to be as unobtrusive as possible on its sensitive site, and thus is 96 percent underground. (One wishes the same could be said for the nearby Hirshhorn Museum.) Among the parts of the new scheme that do show are two clusters of nicely proportioned pavilions that mark the entry points but remain deferential to the beloved red-brick "Castle" nearby. Neither slavishly revivalist nor caught in the clichés of Post-Modernism, they meld discreetly with a well-landscaped park that quietly complements the majestic Mall. *M.F.*



Above: Entry pavilion.
Below: Underground section.



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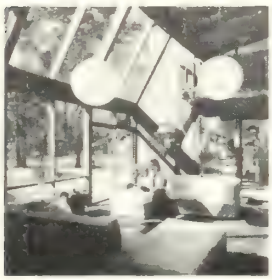
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WHERE BEAUTY IS NOT A LUXURY

(*Continued from page 245*) eight servants' rooms with a washing room and a drying room. All that became one large space: the summer room which serves as Quasar's studio, where he designs and builds airplane models. The first floor with its six-meter-high ceilings, is entirely dedicated to receiving friends. The second floor holds the family quarters.

Quasar met Emmanuelle when she was modeling for Balenciaga. He was an engineer, and painted as a hobby. His uncle was a tailor who taught him to cut and sew his first shirt at fourteen. One day, when lunching at a university restaurant, Quasar saw Emmanuelle's Balenciaga suit just wasn't right for such an environment. So together they drew and drew, and created a different look. Quasar would design; Emmanuelle would wear and sell the clothes. That is how the first Emmanuelle Khanh collection was born in 1958. It became a big success. When Emmanuelle managed the business on her own, Quasar went into other areas. From clothing he moved to furniture, which is the clothing of a house, while the house, he says, is the clothing of life.

"In the sixties, plastic was inexpensive," Quasar recalls. "From clothing I switched to ephemeral furniture. The pieces were inflatable, you sat on them, and when you were tired of them, you threw them away. Paper clothes were also designed at that time. Then came the energy crisis. Today, we have other ideas . . . we're not so expansive.

"I built cubic glass cars. They were the houses you transported with you. What amuses me the most is exploring, pushing the limits. We must be pioneers, and the thought behind the car was to create the most livable urban vehicle. The cube takes the smallest space.

"The airplane is my latest technical challenge. One is confronted with God and with nature. It is mysterious and marvelous at the same time. To build a new plane, lighter than the others, bring new solutions, to design planes for the twenty-first century. I couldn't resist it.

"The house is one huge workshop. In it, I find tranquility, concentration, and space. It is the spiritual center of my family. And from here, you can look out to the horizon." □

WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN

(Continued from page 128) Williams, the head horticulturist, who was also in charge of the government nursery on Dangerfield Island in the Potomac, where the choice of plant material was the largest and the quality the highest. Talking with Mr. Williams, I felt almost immediately that he was the right man to direct and oversee the new garden at the White House, as well as to make other improvements in the White House grounds.

I spoke to Mrs. Kennedy about this, with the hope that if he were willing, Mr. Williams could be transferred by the Park Service to become head gardener at the White House. This strategy worked out well for everyone, and Mr. Williams soon took up his duties there, becoming involved with all the details of building a new garden. Much of the beauty of the White House landscape today is to his credit, as is the quality of the Rose Garden and the corresponding Jacqueline Kennedy Garden on the east side of the house. He has remained ever since as the guiding spirit of the work begun in 1962.

J.B. West helped complete our management team at the White House. He was chief executive officer in charge of White House operations and had been there since the thirties. He knew the schedule and activities of the President and his family and how we could adjust our building program to minimize their inconvenience.

Both Mr. Williams and Mr. West lent their intelligence—not to mention their charm—to the project; their spirits are woven into the planting of the Rose Garden. The mention of their names recalls the ups and downs we experienced. One day while we were removing the old soil and replacing it with new, we cut into a mysterious cable buried in a corner of the garden. It turned out to be the hot line that set off the nation's military alert.

The scene was suddenly alive with security guards, to the alarm of everyone. We learned that the cable had been hastily installed during World War II by the Navy. Records of its location were inaccurate, hence our innocent intrusion. This startling experience was handled with calmness; not even the President reprimanded us for the deep digging. However, months later he asked me if I had found any other interesting objects in my gardening pursuits!

We continued to dig. The garden area was filled with rubble and relics and yielded many curiosities, such as Civil War horseshoes and bits of pots from the old greenhouses. We dug out the whole area to a depth of four feet and filled it with fertile soil. With new soil in place and Mr. Williams at work, my thoughts turned to finding available plant material. The magnolias I imagined planting there would be hard to find.

There were, however, seemingly forgotten groves of interesting trees in the vast public land of the federal city, where old plant material had been allowed to grow in a state of apparent abandon. Near the Tidal Basin and behind the rambling wartime Navy buildings (since torn down), I finally found *the* four magnolias. Forgotten for many years, these trees had survived both men and war. They were balled and burlapped and moved by a crane from obscurity to the White House, where they took root in President Kennedy's Rose Garden.

Their presence changed the entire character of this empty space. Their natural untended growth filled the four bare corners. The tree whose trunk reached higher than the others was planted in the northeast corner by the White House. Crowded by other trees in its previous planting ground, this magnolia had reached toward the light; it had gained a height not often found in *Magnolia Soulangiana,* which tend to spread after a certain period of upward growth.

When the planting was completed, the trees were pruned to give them strength and to create the shape each corner demanded. The special pruning was done by Everett Hicks, an exceptional man in his field. He had been trained by, and spent most of his life with, the Davey Tree Company. He combined a knowledge of pruning large trees with the eye and talent of a sculptor. These magnolias, my original inspiration, were not disappointing when they were in place. They gave life to what had been a cold, bleak space.

There is often unspoken encouragement when trees or shrubs are planted and you review the original plan to see how the reality of three dimensions measures up. Now in the Rose Garden shadows *(Continued on page 252)*



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WHITE HOUSE ROSE GARDEN

(Continued from page 251) gave a quality of aliveness that could be repeated by the smaller trees I hoped to plant in the two flanking twelve-foot borders. The length of the borders would allow for five trees on each side. The force of the summer sun that bakes the city of Washington would be broken by the height and width of these trees.

The trees we chose were Katherine crab apples. Crab apples belong to the rose family and would blend well with the roses, perennials, annuals, and herbs that would grow beneath and around them. Aware that the garden would be used almost every day of the year and that the President had high hopes for it, I decided to divide the long beds into sections. The design, with a crab apple as the center of each section, would repeat itself and run like a ribbon the length of both beds.

A large diamond-shaped outline of santolina would surround each crab-apple tree. Each diamond would be set in a larger outline: a small clipped English boxwood hedge and, next to the lawn, a low growing hybrid boxwood called Greenpillow, developed by Henry Hohman in Kingsville, Maryland.

The divisions gave the garden its own pattern, not unlike an early American garden in Southern Virginia, in which the earth could be left bare if need be and the garden would still have form. The well-outlined areas could be bedded out as the seasons demanded; but the roses could remain, planted in the corners and edges as a strong accent woven into the tapestry of flowers that would change with the seasons.

In spring there would be flowering bulbs, such as tulips, with a border of lapis blue *Muscari.* In summer the border would be changed to plants of dark lavender heliotrope, while larger sections would have pale pink geraniums, lilies, white dianthus, blue salvia, lady's mantle, cosmos, and lemon verbena, to mention a few. In fall the plants could be lifted again to allow for planting of chrysanthemums, *Anemone japonica,* and Michaelmas daisies. As winter approached, the garden would be put to bed, only the roses would remain, while the soil was being fertilized and turned over.

To facilitate this plan, a government greenhouse in Maryland was renovat-

ed to meet the changing needs of the Rose Garden. Perennials could be held over, annuals started, and lilies grown in pots so that they could be used year after year. In this way there was assurance that the garden would have the important plants that were required for each season.

At the east end opposite the President's office, the openness created by the tall trunks of the old magnolias had to be filled in to give privacy and to outline the paved terrace. This was done with hawthorns and mixed varieties of hollies. The East Palatka holly used here was repeated in the bed near the President's office.

The garden was begun in the spring of 1962 and finished at the end of the same year. It was truly President Kennedy's garden. His concern for the growth and well-being of this garden was never ending. Often in the late afternoon working there by myself, changing and pruning plants, I would notice that his door would be open. He would be working at his desk. I was aware of and touched by the serious tranquility of this scene. As he left the office, he always stopped to say, "Hi," or "How is the garden doing?"

Twenty years have gone by. The Rose Garden has seen administrations come and go. It is now known the world over. It has fulfilled John F. Kennedy's vision of a garden that would endure and whose atmosphere, with the subtlety of its ever changing patterns, would suggest the ever changing pattern of history itself.

People seeing the Rose Garden over the past twenty years as the background for White House ceremonies may not have noticed that like all gardens a change was taking place as the plants matured.

When President and Mrs. Reagan moved into the White House it was with the same caring eye of President Kennedy that they asked me if it were possible for the garden to be restored using its original outline and trees; but allowing again for the planting of more roses and flowers.

Still under the loyal and watchful eye of its first and only head gardener, Irvin Williams, the crab-apple trees have been extensively pruned, allowing more sunlight to fall on the plants growing beneath. The osmanthus holly hedges have been clipped back creating more light and air. New roses are being put in under the guidance of Holly Shimizu from the National Arboretum. There are fewer roses than in the beginning as the spaces of light and shadow have changed. (The overgrown border of green pillow boxwood has been updated by new dwarf English boxwood to allow the border flowers to be planted as the seasons change.)

The magnolias have reached a greater height, their strong gray branches filling the empty corners of long ago.

Gardens brought back have the advantage of subtlety that age gives to the trees and shrubs, adding importance to its plan and design. This is true of the Rose Garden today. □

Editor: Babs Simpson



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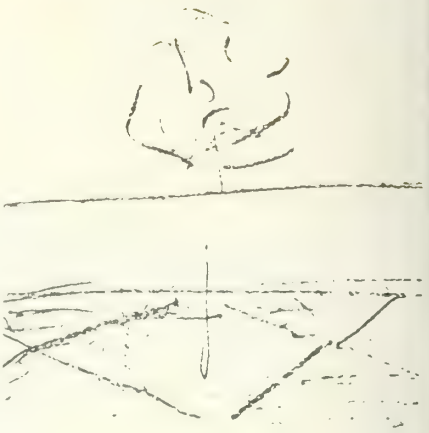
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ROSE GARDEN SCRAPBOOK

Jacqueline Kennedy saved all of Rachel Lambert Mellon's sketches and plans for the White House Rose Garden and included them in a scrapbook that she gave the designer in 1966



The original spring planting list for the Rose Garden with Mrs. Mellon's comments on the combining and placing of tulip colors is preserved in the scrapbook created for her by Jacqueline Kennedy, as are the two very early design proposals here. A 1961 drawing, *above,* on tracing paper shows the deep flower beds divided into diamond-shaped sections by low hedges of boxwood and santolina. The position of the crab-apple trees in the centers of the diamonds is indicated in the quick pencil sketch, *right,* made on a telephone pad. The color notations demonstrate the subtle harmonies of Mrs. Mellon's planting scheme.



Muscari
Santolina
Dianthus
Lady's Mantle
Nepeta
Anemones
Echinopsis
Columbine
Saunders Hybrid Peony
Roses
Mixed Forget-me-nots
Viola (mixed blue)
Viola (white)
Primroses
Martagon Lilies
Spring Crocuses (planted in sedum)
Scillas (planted in sedum)

Hosta (existing)
Epimedium (existing)
Sedum Sieboldii (existing)
Achillea (existing)
Tulips (varieties below)

Queen of the Night Black Parrot Blue Parrot	Purple	*Purples and blues not mixed but going into each other—with* Phlox divaricata
Niphetos	Yellow	
Queen of Sheba Orange Favorite Bokhara Oriental Splendour	Orange	*Yellow and orange mixed with some pinks now and then*
Glacier Sweet Harmony White Triumphator Zwanenburg	White	*White tulips surrounded by gray plants—santolina, lavender, achillea*
Queen of Bartigons Lily-flowering Mariette Parrot Fantasy	Pink	
Eclipse Eclipse Special Florence Nightingale	Red	*Used reds very sparingly* *Accent plants—see plan* *Keep away from* Muscari *blue borders*



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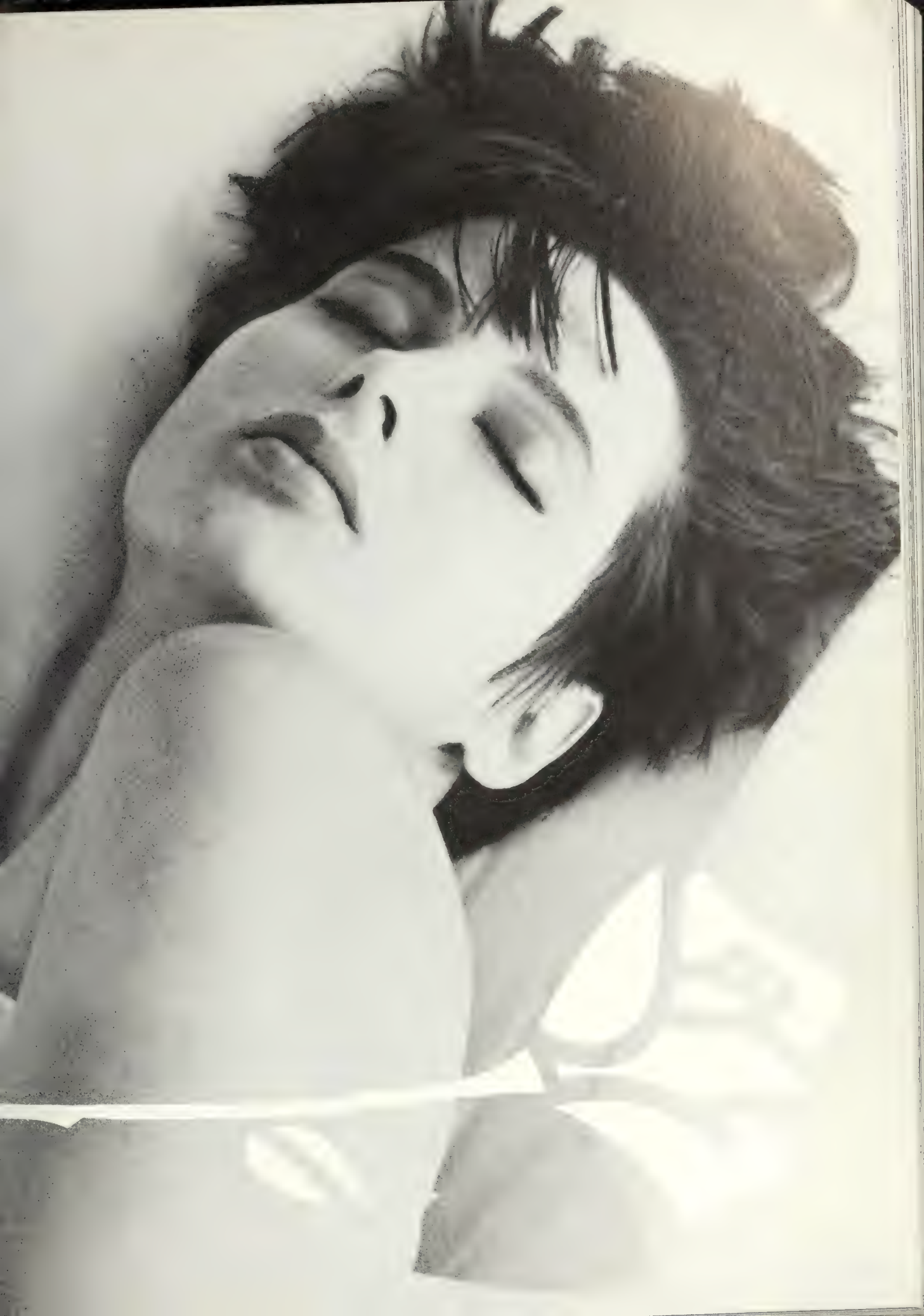
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THE EDITOR'S PAGE



The dramatic Throne Building of the new Royal Palace of Brunei is a much-magnified modern version of the traditional longhouses of Borneo

Ralph Lauren and I were having lunch at The Four Seasons when I first asked him if he would let us photograph his house in Jamaica, and we were delighted when he agreed to let House & Garden visit his private family retreat in Montego Bay, seen on our cover and on pages 126 through 137. Decorated by Angelo Donghia, it is as stylish as it is comfortable—just like the Polo shirts my daughters give me every Father's Day. They still haven't forgiven me, however, for not getting an autograph at that first lunch some months ago. Maybe if Ralph likes the story. . . .

We receive quantities of mail from people who delight in the writing in House & Garden. To all of you readers, Rachel Lambert Mellon's account of the design of the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden at the White House is one of the most moving pieces I have read in House & Garden. This talented landscape designer is a talented writer as well, as you will see on page 164.

Joan Quinn, who, with her husband, Jack, has been collecting art in Los Angeles for a decade or two, was the obvious person to write the Joe Lombardo story, page 176. New Yorkers and visitors to Manhattan will have an opportunity to see more of Lombardo's work at Fifty/50, 793 Broadway, where an exhibit is being installed during the first few days of October and will remain throughout the month. And for a future issue, we've photographed the Quinn house and collection in Los Angeles as well.

The stories behind the furnishings almost always make good reading in the pages of House & Garden, but I can't remember one quite as intriguing as the history of the chairs and sofas in the New York apartment of the Earl of Mount Charles. For Elaine Greene's account of the George IV memorabilia there, see page 138.

Decorating Editor Kaaren Gray and the French photographer Jacques Dirand went to photograph some beautiful rooms by Boston decorator Bill Hodgins in Tori Winkler Thomas's Virginia house. On their arrival, however, their anticipation quickly escalated into amazement, for they found the landscape architect had decided to turn her garden into a larger-than-life painting. For a wonderful story on Garden Madness, see page 144.

We've spent many summer months combing the beach towns west of Los Angeles, but I never fail to be amazed at the architectural treasures tucked among the blocks of banality that line those streets. Such a treasure is a house in Hermosa Beach by Morphosis, the architectural team of Michael Rotondi and Thom Mayne. If we hadn't included Peter Aaron's exciting street photograph, page 182, no one could have guessed that this handsome and sophisticated piece of architecture fits on a site only 35 feet wide.

If L.A. architecture is the most experimental, Mario Buatta decorating is the most seasoned and familiar. Strongly rooted in the English decorative tradition, his way with chintz, needlepoint rugs, and animal paintings charms our readers more than almost anything else we publish. See page 190.

When we called Oberto Gili to ask him to go to Brunei to photograph the sultan's new palace, *above,* we discovered that a trip to Borneo was a lifetime dream come true for the Italian photographer. In the adventure stories of Gili's childhood, the action always took place in a romantic-sounding place called Borneo. In this case, real life surpassed childhood fantasy, as Gili's photographs and Martin Filler's text will demonstrate, page 154.

This month we begin a new column, On Decorating by Mark Hampton, a familiar name to House & Garden readers—and followers of decoration everywhere. We were very pleased when the New York decorator agreed to become a regular contributor to our pages. For his first column, and one of the wonderful Mark Hampton watercolors that have become coveted treasures among his clients and friends, see page 16. Welcome Mark.

Lou Gropp

Editor-in-Chief

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FRANCES ELKINS AND THE SECRETS OF AN APPEALING ROOM

By Mark Hampton



The drawing room in Casa Amesti, Frances Elkins's house in Monterey, now owned by the Old Capital Club.

The question always remains: what makes a room work? I am not talking about taste or style or decorative trends. I mean, why is a room comfortable to sit in, to read in? What makes a room good for parties? After all, entertaining plays a primary role in the planning of many rooms, even if the parties are imaginary. Some rooms, in fact, look fine; they appear to have been beautifully and successfully decorated, but they turn out not to be comfortable, and the final result is that no one uses those rooms. They do not work. Perhaps the lighting is poor, or there might be a bottleneck. More often than not, however, there is a problem with the arrangement of the furniture.

When a room works successfully, it is almost always arranged well. The placement of the furniture not only allows it to function properly once people are in the room, but it also attracts people into the room. It creates an atmosphere separate from the actual decorative style of the room, and many people who do not focus on the details of decoration respond to the arrangement of furniture. The floor plan of a room, then, is the real starting point in decoration; without a skillful, workable plan, the decorative scheme can never really succeed.

A few months ago, I was in Monterey, California, and saw the house of Frances Elkins, the famous decorator who died in 1953, and who did beautiful work all over the United States in the thirties and forties. Casa Amesti, the Spanish Colonial House that Mrs. Elkins renovated and decorated in the forties, was published in House & Garden in 1945, and the big drawing room still looks the way I remembered it from the black-and-white photograph years ago. When I returned to New York, I dug the picture out of my boxes of old House & Garden and Vogue pictures, and in fact the room is unchanged. The style of the room is difficult to pin down. The house itself was built in the 1830s and has elements of several architectural styles, a characteristic of Monterey houses. Thick adobe walls, plank ceilings painted as

MARK HAMPTON



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though they were plaster, and woodwork that is rather like that in Victorian and antebellum houses all over America.

The plan of the drawing room is very symmetrical. The carpets, furniture, and accessories are widely varied in period and style—Georgian, Regency, French Provincial, and Chinese. The color scheme is strict—yellow and blue and white. The arrangement, however, is enormously skillful and could have been used with any kind of furniture. It is the most important element in the design of the room, and it is what relates the decoration to the architecture.

You enter the room through double doors in the center of an end wall, and your sense of direction and entrance and what is going on in general is clear and confident. There is no confusion whatsoever, and unless confusion is what you're aiming for, it is always best to avoid it. The long wall to the right is all French windows leading onto the typical Monterey balcony (this room is on the upper floor). The long wall to the left, opposite the French windows, has a fireplace in the middle, flanked by a pair of doors. The dark polished floor is covered with rather small Chinese carpets in blue and white and yellow. In the center of the room stands a large Georgian mahogany partners' desk running parallel to the fireplace wall. There are pairs everywhere, but they are not always used together. The fireplace is flanked by a single French Provincial wing chair and a Hepplewhite open armchair whose mate stands on the other side of the room. The partners' desk has a Regency stool on either side. The walls on either side of the mantel are arranged with a pair of George III demilune tables under a pair of Chinese plaques.

The walls on either side of the door entering the room are hung with a set of eight engravings framed in simple molded frames that have been marbleized in lapis blue. Under the pictures, however, are a sofa on one side and an English Regency hunt table on the other, each balancing the other in terms of weight. Since the back of the sofa is lower than the combined height of the hunt table and the objects on it, Mrs. Elkins rather freely hung two smaller pictures in the gap under the four engravings. Freedom in decoration is usually a euphemism for carelessness.

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Mrs. Elkins was not careless. The sofa has a reading lamp nearby—not two, just one. I am constantly being grilled about reading lamps. "Where are the reading lamps?" It seems to me that it is far better to select a few comfortable spots for reading and equip them with the necessary light, one or two places will do. After all, a living room is not a study hall. On the other hand, a room where you clearly cannot read looks awfully stiff and somehow limited. Like a waiting room.

The far end of the room has another, larger seating group. The small chairs around the room can clearly be drawn

No man wants to sit down in a place where he will constantly have to hop up when anyone enters the room

up whenever and wherever they are needed. The best place for a large seating group, moreover, is away from the entrance to the room. No one wants to sit in the path of the people who are entering or leaving the room or who are standing rather than sitting. And no man wants to sit down in a place where he will constantly have to hop up when anyone enters the room. The fireplace also does not need to have a huge furniture arrangement around it. It will be cozy enough for one or two people who are alone in the room if there are a couple of comfortable chairs and a footstool. I do not mean to say that you should avoid a large seating group around the fireplace. Nor, however, should you sacrifice the comfort of a room simply because of a stubborn desire to mass all the comfortable furniture around the fireplace. The main visual roles of a fireplace are to look architectural on the one hand and to give an appearance of inviting warmth on the other.

So here is the impression of Mrs. Elkins's room. It is orderly and architectural, with walls treated in a careful,

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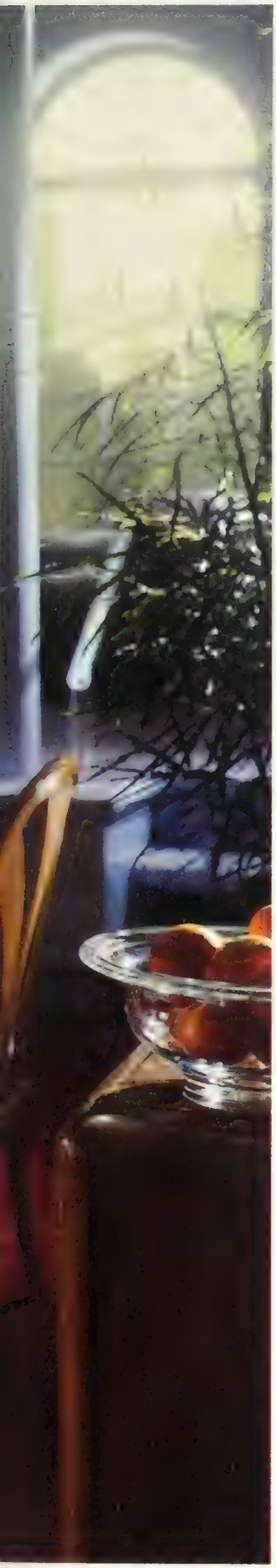


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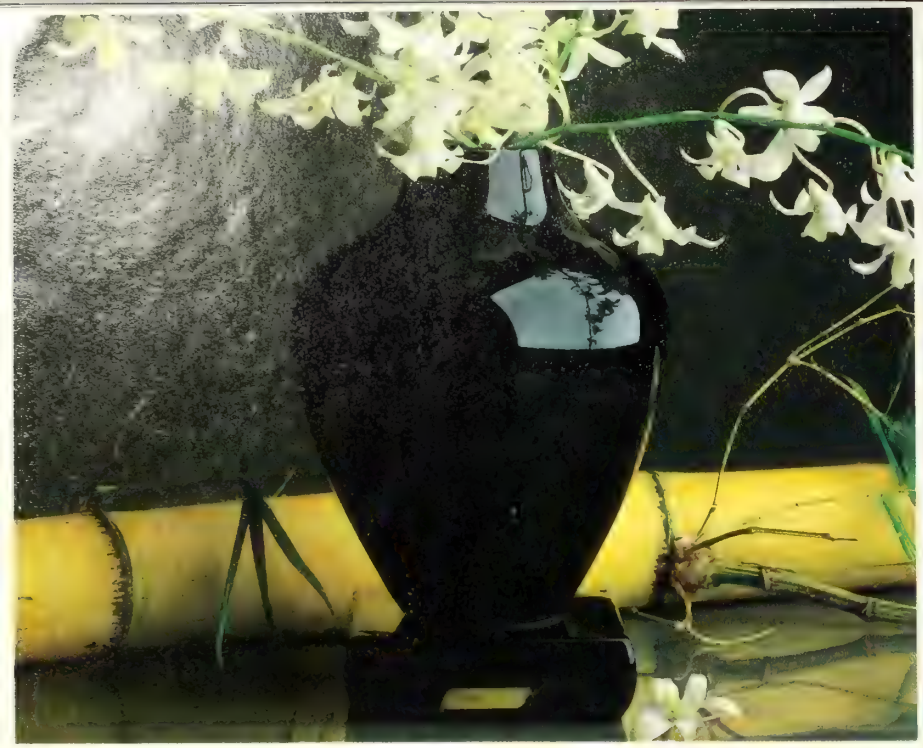
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symmetrical way. Against this balanced backdrop an interesting variety of furniture is placed in such a way that the room looks beautiful and immediately communicates its ability to be comfortable. It is equally appealing to a small group and to large gatherings.

There are pairs everywhere, but they are not always used together

The large desk in the center of the room holds the center of the room firmly in focus. It is a perfect place for objects, books, flowers, and a beautiful lamp. It is itself a handsome piece of furniture. Furthermore, it plays a sort of iconographic role. Did Mrs. Elkins write letters in her drawing room? Or did she arrange the place cards there? Perhaps she liked crossword puzzles or jigsaw puzzles. Whatever she used that desk for, it gives the room another dimension, a lively quality of being a place where one can work or write. It is the rich variety of uses, formal and informal, solitary and gregarious, that gives this room such an inviting atmosphere. The furniture and carpets and pictures all adhere to this personal, rather thoughtful quality. The room is full of reason and a sense of what is appropriate and still personal.

Mrs. Elkins's brother was, of course, the celebrated Chicago architect David Adler, who built marvelously beautiful houses in Illinois, New York, Florida, California—all over America—and the compatibility of their shared tastes and knowledge is well known. Perhaps one of the most obvious of Mrs. Elkins's decorating traits is the architectural aspect of her approach to her work. But alongside this architectural clarity, and it is the clearness of her viewpoint that makes her rooms so understandable after all these years, there is a deep understanding of what makes an atmosphere civilized without seeming trumped up. Rooms are like people—it is nice if they are pretty; but it is preferable to avoid that scorching criticism: beautiful but dumb. □



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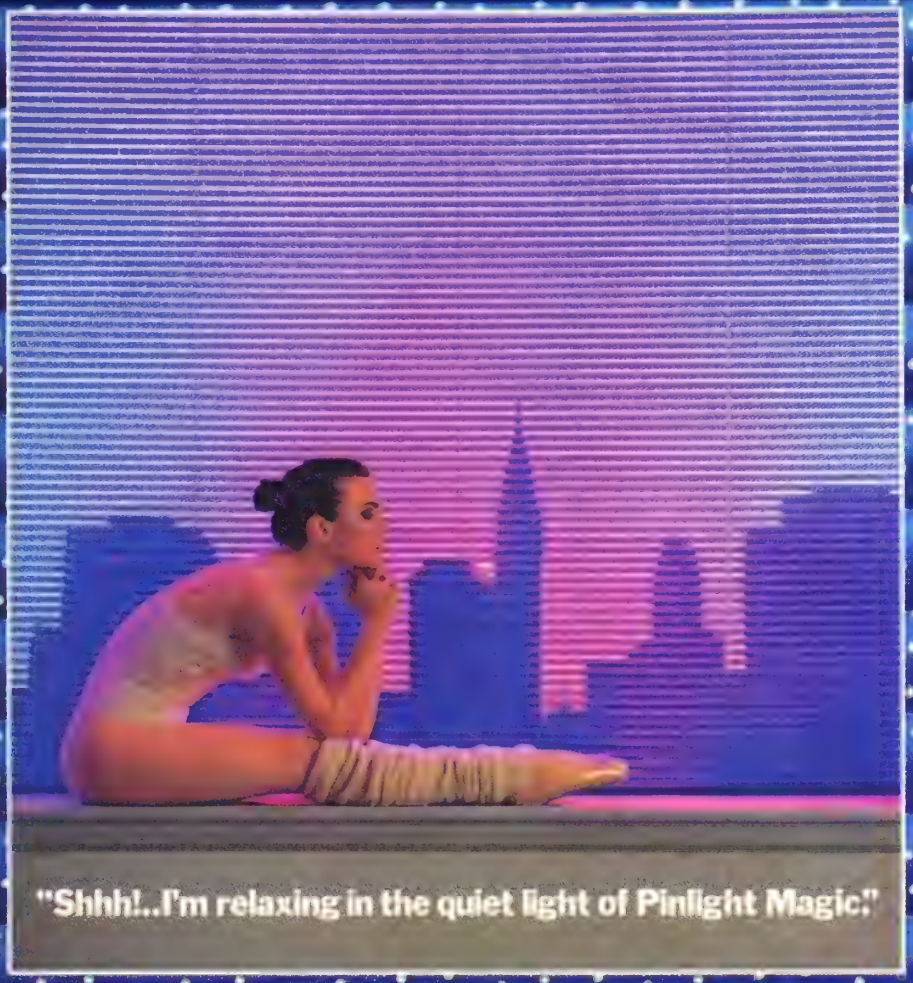


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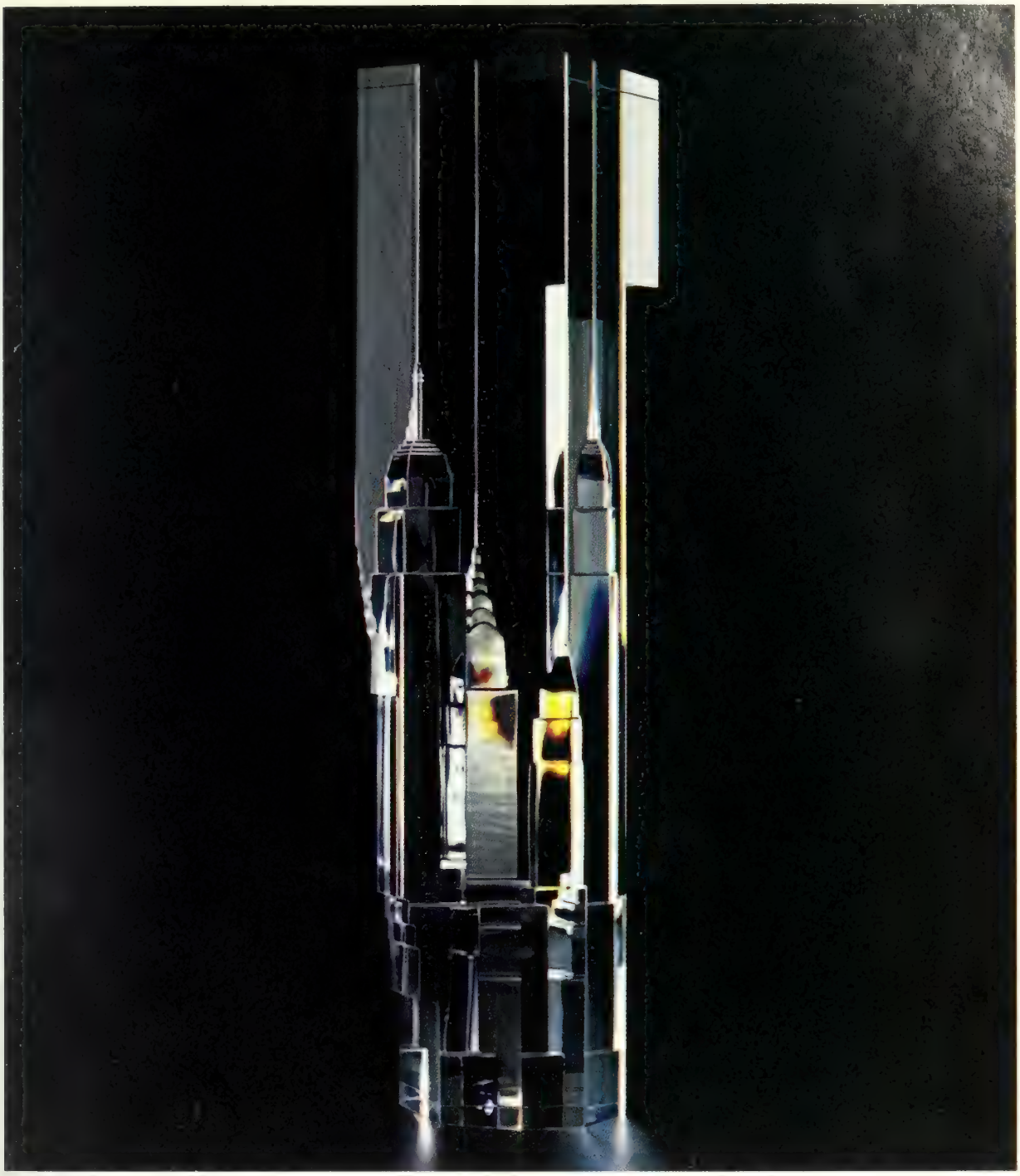
By Jonathan Lieberson

Pushing aside a complimentary tray of passion-fruit slices, I threw myself down on the bed of my room in the inn, reputedly the most luxurious hotel in Big Sur, and asked myself how so banal a conjunction of circumstances could have soured a holiday trip. The flight from New York had been marred by my seatmate, a California business executive of enormous girth, whose buttresses of bacon spilled over the armrest onto me, and who, after marinating himself in Scotch, fell into a deep sleep, punctuated by slurred off-color dream phrases, during the projection of a James Bond thriller. We were seated to the extreme left of the screen, and almost under it, so that I could only view the screen by craning my neck and looking past him. Unfortunately, near the climax of the film, he turned in his sleep with a protracted gurgle, and now faced me so closely that our noses would have touched—they did once—had I not leaned to my far left. In order to see the film, I had to run the risk of his awakening to find me staring directly into his massive face. Apart from this circumstance, and although the airline staff behaved, contrary to the implication carried by the name of the carrier, in a thoroughly disorganized fashion, the rest of the flight was without incident. Indeed, the biggest nonevent of all was the nonarrival of my luggage in San Francisco, a trifling affair I had to neglect in order to sprint the length of the vast airport to make a connecting flight to Monterey. A picturesque surprise greeted me when I ran panting onto the runway to catch it, for what I saw was not a plane at all, but what looked like a laundry basket held in the beak of a listless pterodactyl. Stepping into the contraption, I saw that in fact it was an ancient reconnaissance six-seater, in the charge of two giggling teen-agers, one of whom was boning up on an airway manual held upside down. The flight operations—an absurd description of the fiddling they did with the knobs, buttons, and pedals at their disposal—certainly sent color into the cheeks of the passengers: for some forty minutes the plane passed through a series of nauseating lurches and abrupt, horrifying descents into air pockets, each of which was accompanied, as in a church responsory, by moans from the passengers as pitiful as those in the "Dies Irae" of Verdi's *Requiem*.



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The inn (really a cluster of fancy dormitories perched on a hill), where I arrived a gibbering wreck some hours later, had been described to me as surpassing in luxury any similar institution in northern California. How wildly irresponsible this speculation was came home to me with peculiar force after my first interview with the desk clerk. A pretty blonde whose empty eyes and toneless manner of speech suggested a lifetime spent strung out on hypnotic drugs among the Frisbee crowd, she told me that I would be able to pay for my room only by credit card, provided that I furnish identification in the form of a driver's license together with information about the make and year of my automobile. When I explained to her that I neither used credit cards nor drove a



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car, but offered to pay by personal check backed up by my passport, she unconvincingly suppressed a giggle at my antiquated preference for impeccable New York banks and official government documents over plastic cards.

In any case, the matter disposed of after a half-hour debate that drew attention from other guests by its ferocity and free use of invective, I went on to explain that my luggage had been orphaned. "I have no fresh changes, you see," I said airily, "so will you send the presser or the room boy for the clothes I am wearing, and also the waiter, as I'll be dining in my room tonight in about an hour. . . ." Interrupting me curtly, the clerk said that the inn had no presser, no room boy, no laundry services of any kind, and no room service; if I wished, some slices of passion fruit or a jug of spring water could be sent to my room, but for a meal I would have to go to the hotel restaurant. "There it is," she said, pointing out the window to a speck on the top of the next mountain range and easily a forty-minute walk away, "but it won't be open for another two hours and since it's Saturday night, you won't get a reservation there for another two hours after that." I subsisted the rest of the afternoon by clawing open bananas pilfered from the hotel lobby.

At eight that evening, smoothing down my disheveled city clothes, I set out on the "scenic" walk the hotel had constructed to the restaurant. It proved to be an endlessly long and winding path through a forest, with funny little fake dead ends and rickety bridges over dried-up streams. The deeper I went into the forest the more each step I took grew palpable with tension. I imagined the ghosts of murderous lumberjacks whose trade had been displaced when the hotel was built leering at me through broken branches; at every turn in the path I saw the outline of a puma ready to dispatch me. When I reached the restaurant, a glass-and-wood affair typical of northern California, I was somewhat spooked, compulsively dusting pine needles off my shoulders and disengaging burrs from my trouser legs, which may explain why the headwaiter seated me in a distant corner of the room, under a giant wooden beam and near the source of the inevitable recorded harp arrangements of Ravel and Satie. So fearful was I of not securing another reservation for the next 24 hours that I spent many hours in this seat, alarming other guests by my gluttony and stuffing buns and rolls into my jacket. It was pleasant enough, save for one irritating feature of the place. Each waiter I encountered there had cultivated the same strange fear of making an assertion. No matter how trivial the information that I requested, it was conveyed to me in an interrogative. I would ask, "How is the veal cooked?" and I would be told, "On the barbecue?" "Where is the bar?" would be answered by "Down the hall?" I have since learned that this curious affectation has been superseded in some parts of California by the practice of responding to a question by repeating it, so that the answer to "Where is the wine list?" would be "Where is the wine list?", thus insuring that no information whatsoever is passed.

After my first day at the inn, I wearied of writing letters home and wearing earplugs at the swimming pool to drown out the laughter of debauched singles gamboling in the hot tubs nearby, and decided it was time to explore the countryside. I had planned to rent a bicycle, but no service of this kind existed in Big Sur. I next considered a car and driver. This, too, appeared unavailable until after much effort I discovered a limousine service in distant Santa Clara. The car I was provided with, however—an immense silver Cadillac with circular portholes—was not ideally suited to the rustic terrain of Big Sur or its pockmarked roads, and when I was driven in it to places of interest such as state parks or nearby towns I was ogled by passers-by. Perhaps, noting my rumpled suit and distracted look, they assumed that I was a presidential candidate who had lost his way, but as that sight must be fairly common to them, the explanation could not be a complete one.

My first call in the Cadillac was at a celebrated local hangout called Nepenthe, a restaurant where I settled myself into a crowd of T-shirted, bearded cats with potbellies and their women, many of whom took after Boadicea in appearance. We all sat there munching carrots and scooping up garbanzo beans, for the most part in silence, although occasionally a recording of bell music would be played or

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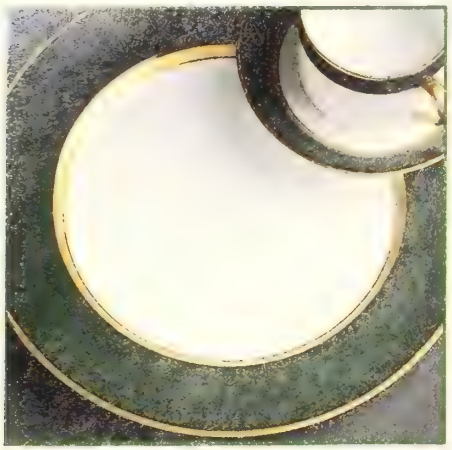
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Electrified by fear, I doubled my efforts to reach the other side of the rockslide, and began to scurry in little steps like a Chinese peasant

some comment from one of the couples, like "cool it, Goldilocks," would be heard. Everyone was exceedingly gentle, and even the bee that circled my ambrosiaburger for a while retreated gracefully when he realized that I would not share it willingly. And the Druid wearing large amounts of wooden jewelry and a Navaho blanket who approached me and softly inquired whether I was a member of "the healing community" begged off on her own initiative when I replied that I subscribed in every detail to the therapeutic approach of Fritz Kunkel.

The next day we drove to Carmel—a show-town with expensive stores selling, it seemed, nothing but bread—and then on to Monterey, which, if possible, appeared to have surpassed its earlier efforts to ensnare tourists. Within moments of alighting from the car, I was swept into a noisome sea of corpulent psychiatrists and unreconstructed bohemians on Fisherman's Wharf. We inspected (as if with a group mind) little clay lobsters, scrimshaw work, and cute statues of bullwhackers; smiled at a flea-bitten trained monkey snatching dollar bills from us; threw tidbits to jaded performing sea lions and pelicans; stared idiotically at piles of bug-eyed rock cod and dried blowfish. Although one can tire rapidly of bleached wood, sandpipers, and flattened cypresses, the Seventeen-Mile Drive outside Monterey and more generally the coastline highway from it to Big Sur struck me as splendid as ever. As one leaves Monterey, with its mansions and golf courses, the road takes one through large, brilliantly green fields that stretch almost to the water line, and everywhere there is light and color and the smell of the sea. Then the road climbs and passes through more green fields, dotted with horses and sheep, which overlook a turbulent sea out of which huge piles of rock rise abruptly; the effect is rather like that of the western Irish coast. As it nears Big Sur, the road climbs even more and soon is nothing but a thin strip of pavement cut into the rock of the mountain, with high cliffs on one side and bottomless pits on the other, marked by exceedingly dangerous diabolical twists and hairpin turns, affording the motorist startling views of tremendous expanses. I regret to say that amidst all this beauty I was rent asunder by the conflicting impulses to throw myself out the window, on the one hand, and on the other to press myself to the door of the car nearest the inside of the road. And in addition, a disquieting suspicion arose within me that my driver, who had already displayed difficulties in negotiating the Cadillac through the twists in the road, was slowly becoming hypnotized by the vast expanses ahead of him and would soon plunge the car into the sea. To ensure that he was on the ball, I periodically shouted at him at the top of my voice to ignore the passing spectacles.

If I was afflicted with vertigo that afternoon, a more complicated strain of the same condition affected me the following day. I had always dreamed of visiting Esalen, the famous "human potential" institute located nearby my hotel. Unfortunately, on ringing up I was told that a rockslide blocked the road linking me to it, and that if I wished to visit, I could only do so between six at night and six in the morning when the highway workers repairing the road were not at their posts, and that I should then have to cross the slide by foot, a distance of about a mile. My enthusiasm to see Esalen suffocated the voices of reason, and I arranged with my driver to drop me at my end of the slide at 6 A.M., and with an official of the Institute to meet me at the other end shortly thereafter.

It was still dark when I started my way across the slide the next day. At first, I inched along, hugging the mountainside, every so often coming with a start against a bulldozer or a road sign warning of danger. Twice I took the wrong path and walked perilously close to the edge of a cliff, leaping back when I heard the sound of waves hundreds of feet below me. Midway across, my ears picked up something that turned my blood to ice. The wind



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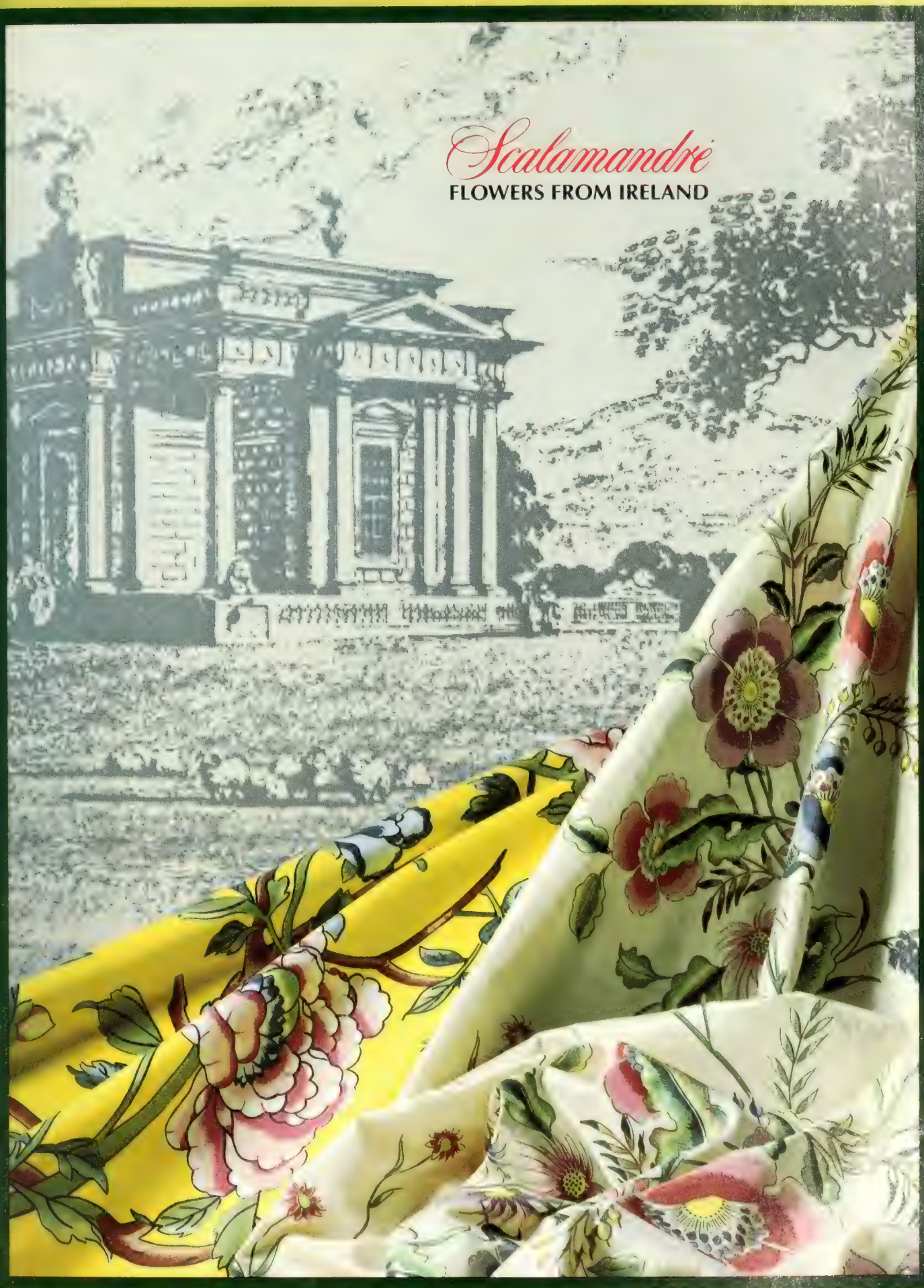
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had dislodged a handful of pebbles from the mountainside above me, and they skipped down over the larger rocks. As I was for all purposes blind, I had no way of checking my immediate conjecture that this signified the beginning of another, more extensive and devastating rockslide. Electrified by fear, I doubled my efforts to reach the other side and began to scurry across the path in little steps like a Chinese peasant, my body bent almost double and my hands tracing the ground to ensure my safety. In doing all this, however, I neglected to consider what effect the previous night's dense fog might have had on the consistency of the soil at the places where the workers had plowed it with their bulldozers. At one point I sank with a piercing scream to my knees in mud and imagined that I was about to drop all the way down the mountain into Davy Jones's locker. Fortunately, the light had begun to break and I made out a tree root which I used to help me reach firmer soil, where I lay for a few minutes recovering my strength. Then, in the dimness, I saw a shape that lightened my heart: another human being was crossing the slide in the same direction as I was going. Except that he was an old, white-haired man who carried some sort of staff, I shall never know who he was, for despite my friendly cries he took no notice whatsoever of me; perhaps, as was later suggested to me, he was a Zen monk walking to the Tassajara monastery down the coast, and lost in abstraction. In any case, despite his frosty reception, I followed him, and as we painfully made our way across the rocks, it amused me to imagine that I could with justice reply to my grandchildren's query as to why I crossed the rockslide on Highway 1 at six in the morning with the remark of one who performed an equally dangerous journey: "Because it was there." Fortified by this thought, I made it to the other side, where I met my contact from Esalen, and within minutes after stepping into her car, we drove into the gate of the Institute, a compound of houses located on a strip of land between the Santa Lucia Mountains and the sea.

To describe Esalen as devoted to research into "human potential" utterly fails to convey the staggering number and variety of its activities. For this one must turn to a document that was placed in my hand on arrival, and which is one of the most absorbing I have ever read: the Esalen catalogue of January–June 1984. According to it, just a few of the methods for exploring the central questions of life offered by Esalen are: "psychosynthesis," "holonomic integration" (which employs "evocative music, controlled breathing, facilitative body work, and mandala drawing"), "the hypnotic approaches of Dr. Milton H. Erickson," "hypnosis for health maintenance," "bioenergetics," "group rituals," "Hawaiian Huna" (an ancient mystical teaching of Polynesia), "modern kundalini research," "singing Gestalt therapy," "hot seat" encounter groups, "neo-Reichian emotional release," and ways "to get release from chronic pain and tension" such as "Moshe Feldenkrais' awareness work, Lauren Berry's joint work, deep tissue as taught by Ida Rolf, and the trigger point work of John St. John." One can visit the Esalen hot springs on a week night (open, however, to the public only from one to five A.M.), or attend a weekend seminar, or stay for longer periods of time as a resident or student.

Although once one has been exposed to the Esalen catalogue it is difficult to put down, the descriptions in it of courses offered by the Institute present some unusual problems of interpretation. One weekend course, entitled "Exorcising the Demon 'Should,' " is described in part as follows: "within each of us there lives a demon—our own personal critic—whose greatest joy comes from criticizing, denigrating, and destroying every experience we have . . . this demon, who commands us to be who we aren't in order to satisfy someone we can never satisfy, is the demon that we will seek to exorcise during the weekend." The price is $230, quite a bargain in light of the far greater price paid in similar efforts by Rimbaud or the Marquis de Sade. The promises made by other courses are not as easy to pin down. A course, also carrying the price tag of $230, called "Zen and the Art of Fly Fishing," is described as "a combination of practical instruction, visualization, physical exercise, and guided fantasy"; it argues that "there is a focus and subtlety of movement in fly fishing akin to Eastern meditative disciplines. The possibility always exists of enter-

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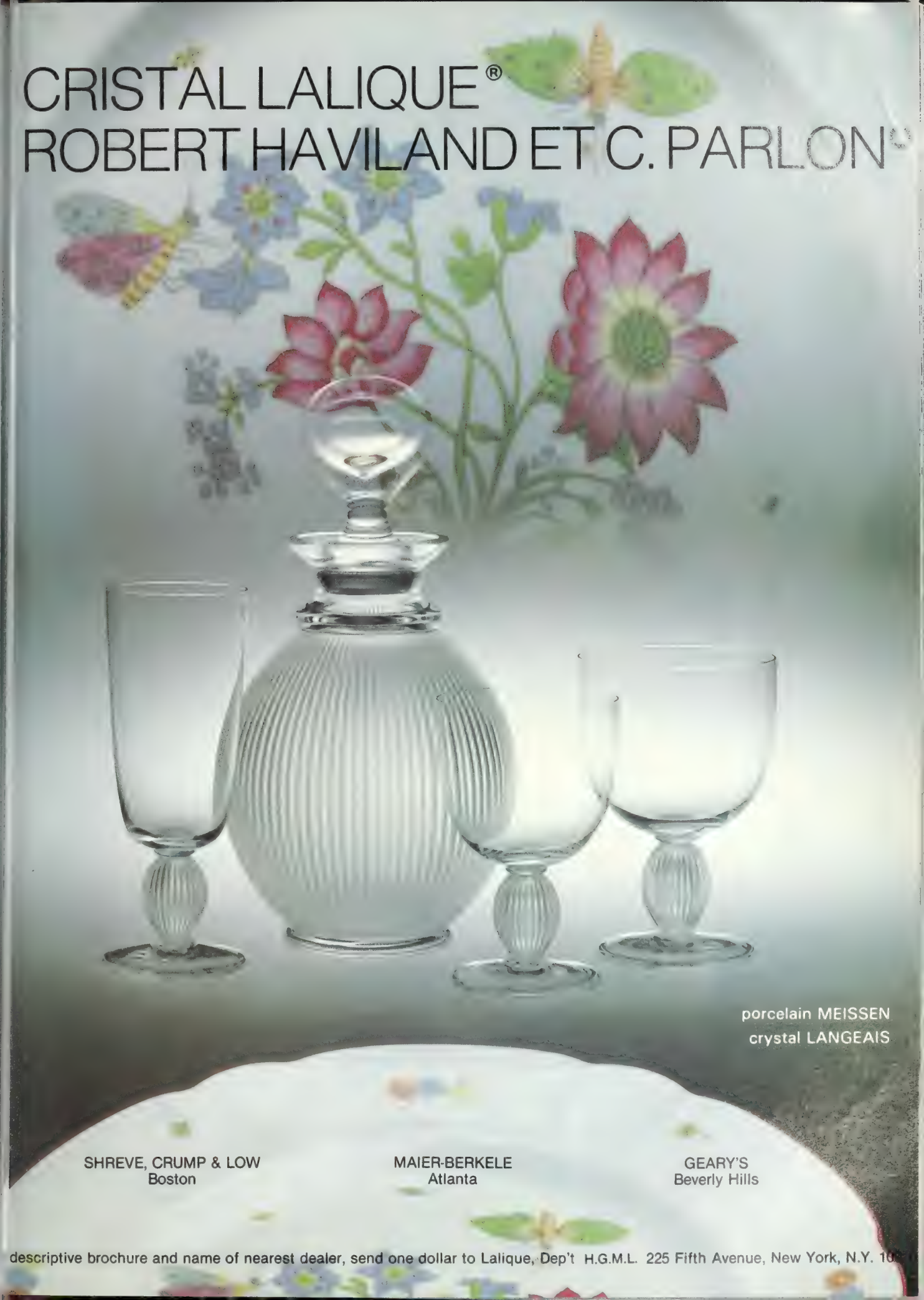
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ing the trout's world. In fly fishing, the trout are the teachers," a claim which suggests underwater tutorials, taught by Disney-like professor fishes.

Pitiless Teutonic rigor is implied in the following course, entitled "Polarity Massage" ($230): "The Esalen mineral baths will be the classroom for exploring and learning by experience the basic concepts of polarity body work through the medium of massage. Emphasis will be on the dynamics of living anatomy and polarity energy balancing methods as implemented in the course of complete, full-body massage." And one course that would seem to require a stern hand if it is not to degenerate into hanky-panky claims to introduce "a new way of seeing the body, using eyes, nose, throat, hands, ears, and hara," the last named being "an energy center located two fingers below the navel." The course description that really sent thought balloons with question marks in them gliding over my head was "Shamanic Healing, Journeying, and the Afterlife Experience: Basic and Intermediate Shamanic Practice" ($680). In it, "with the aid of traditional sonic-driving and dancing methods, the group will engage in archetypical exercises and rituals practiced by North and South American Indian shamans to awaken dormant human capabilities and forgotten connections with the powers of nature. Practice will include shamanic journeys to both the Lower- and Upper-worlds for knowledge and power, work with animal and plant powers, divination, clairvoyance, and shamanic methods of healing." In addition, "there will be an introduction to the Ghost Dance method and to shamanic ways of exploring the afterlife experience"; participants are invited to "bring drums and rattles." The faculty conducting these seminars and workshops contains many unusual personalities, including a specialist in "personal applications of video," the founder of the "Gestalt Fool Theater Family of San Francisco," a writer "with earlier careers as homemaker and fiber artist," and someone called "Hareesh," crisply described as "interested in alternative nutritional programs." A tenure-track faculty member is Jezariah Canyon Munyer, who teaches a course entitled "Miracles of Infancy" ($230) with his parents; he is one year old.

Inflamed by expectations of witnessing some of these activities during my visit to Esalen, I was distressed to find that none of them were being currently offered, and that because of the rockslide I was doomed to spend twelve hours in what can only be described as a peculiar mixture of a singles resort and a lunatic asylum. This impression was suggested to me by my first sight of residents at the Institute, a

> My masseuse was a vigorous apostle of health who wore only a pair of sunglasses and a towel around her waist

wiry, bearded old man out of John Brown's gang jogging painfully down a hillside path in the company of two laughing young women wearing waist length hair and feather earrings, and it was confirmed by my encounters with others, equally arresting: a tall, head nodding man who had just been to Findhorn, in Scotland, a "community" where he had been taught to speak with affection to cabbages and roses in order to make them grow, and where he assured me, astonishing results had occurred; an earnest, bespectacled woman who had vowed never to use the word "I," and who hugged whom ever she was with before taking leave; two elderly ladies in jump suits, sitting motionlessly and staring pop-eyed at the sea, then vigorously stripping off the suits and surrendering themselves to the sun; a woman who skipped down a hill singing coloratura exercises in half-voice, and then stopped, took a breath, and erupted into some deafening spectacular high notes; a man who said, "I have too many cars in my emotional garage."

I attended lunch in the mess hall of the Institute in a crowd full of saintly faces and uplifted voices; declining an offer to some malodorous organic stew, I confined myself to a stubby glass of low-fat milk, until I observed



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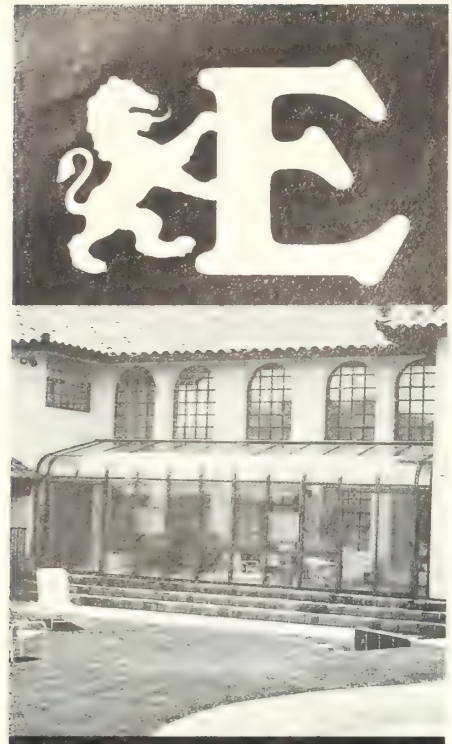

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that the glass was caked with algae and in a lightning move surreptitiously bleached a nearby cactus plant with the tainted liquid. After lunch, I elected to take a massage near the hot springs from one of Esalen's celebrated massage team. The scene that greeted me when I arrived there did not differ appreciably from that found in a typical fifties nudist colony brochure: a number of senior citizens (including some Wagnerian Rhinemaidens with braids) frolicking in outdoor stone tubs and tossing medicine balls back and forth, splendidly unashamed of their liver spots, giant bellies, and floppy udders. It would have been instructive to take a leisurely survey of the behavior but the sulfurous odors rising from the springs forced me to turn away.

My masseuse I guessed to be in her mid forties, a vigorous apostle of health, who wore only a pair of sunglasses and a towel around her waist. To my delight, she posed not a single question to me and set to work immediately. Midway through the massage, however, while I was lying face down, I noticed to my surprise that her towel had crumpled to the floor below me. Thinking that her devotion to her work made her forgetful of such details, I was about to inform her when I felt my own towel gently disengaged from my body and tossed to the floor, so that both of us were fully exposed to the meditating grandmothers I had seen earlier on the cliff above the bathhouse. Her soothing fingers soon made me semiconscious, however, and I would have remained so were it not for an unforeseen incident. A masseur who had been working over a mountain of flesh of indeterminate sex on the next sunning table decided to take this time to retail his spiritual autobiography in a voice that could be heard at San Simeon some fifty miles down the coast. At first I tried to dismiss him as a mere phenomenon in space and time, of no enduring significance, but I was unable to sustain this attitude and began to listen. The import of his story, it seems, was that he had recently discovered through painful self-analysis that he had never really been born. As he pounded and remolded the creature beneath him, he told us that he was following a new "discipline" called "rebirthing therapy," moreover of the "wet" sort that involved his being dragged in large basins of warm water and then, with great ceremony, lifted like a neonate into the world. He subscribed, he continued, to a rigorous retraining of his character and each day would write on his wrist a guiding thought like "purify yourself," and his teachers had assigned him exercises to test his powers of forming and reforming "relationships," one of which required that he spend exactly sixty minutes in a bar with a woman. No doubt in a desperate effort to cut him off, the entity under his care stirred to life and twisted helplessly about on the mat. "Shhhhh," the masseur cooed, firmly holding him down,"muscles have memories. My deep tissue work may be reviving them. I may touch your foot and a memory of your childhood may return. You may cry, you may get angry. If you want to verbalize your feelings, here is a pillow to scream into." When my own massage was over, and I was leaving, I looked back at him: he was now violently kneading the flesh of his client, whose face was buried in the pillow, and repeating the words, "Externalize! Verbalize! Externalize! . . ."

According to the catalogue's scarcely intelligible description, Gestalt practice is "a form—nonanalytic, noncoercive, nonjudgmental—evolving out of the work of Fritz Perls, relating that work to ways of personal clearing and development both ancient and modern," and one of the highlights of my visit was to be that of attending a Gestalt encounter group led by one of Esalen's founders, Richard Price. A "hot seat" session, in which Price "facilitated" the catharsis of whoever chose to sit on a designated pillow near him, it was one of the very silliest events I have ever seen. The pillow was immediately occupied by a cute Texan woman of about twenty. Within a minute, as if on cue, she released a thin, low wail which I took to be a malfunction of the air-conditioning unit until it changed suddenly into an ear-splitting shriek. This in turn subsided and the low wail, suggestive of the smoke-intoxicated cries of the Pythian priestess at Delphi, returned. Then she began to mutter: "No, Daddy, no! Find someone your own age to play with!", words of unmistakable significance that electrified the fraternity sitting cross-legged around her. When she then shouted



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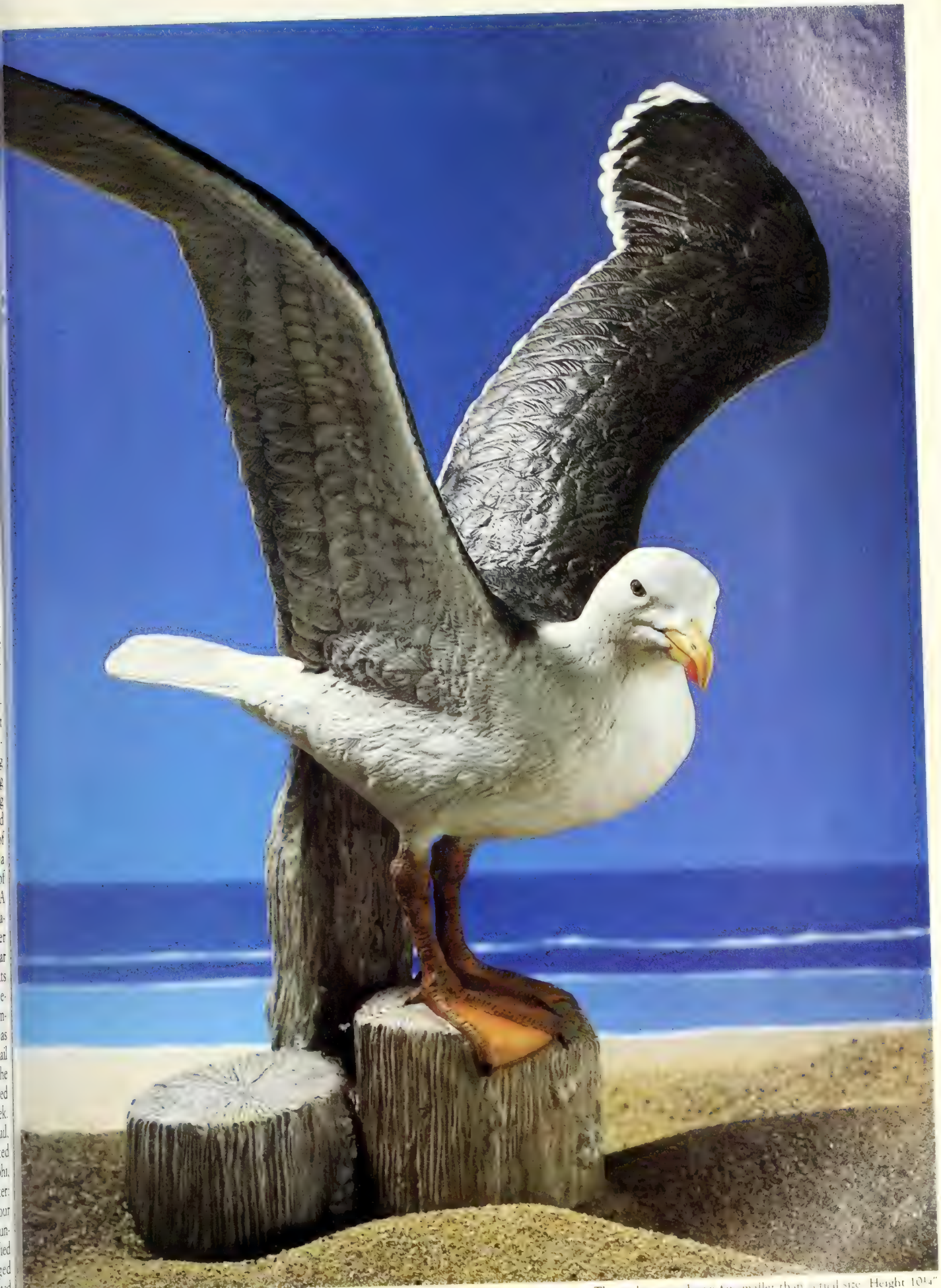
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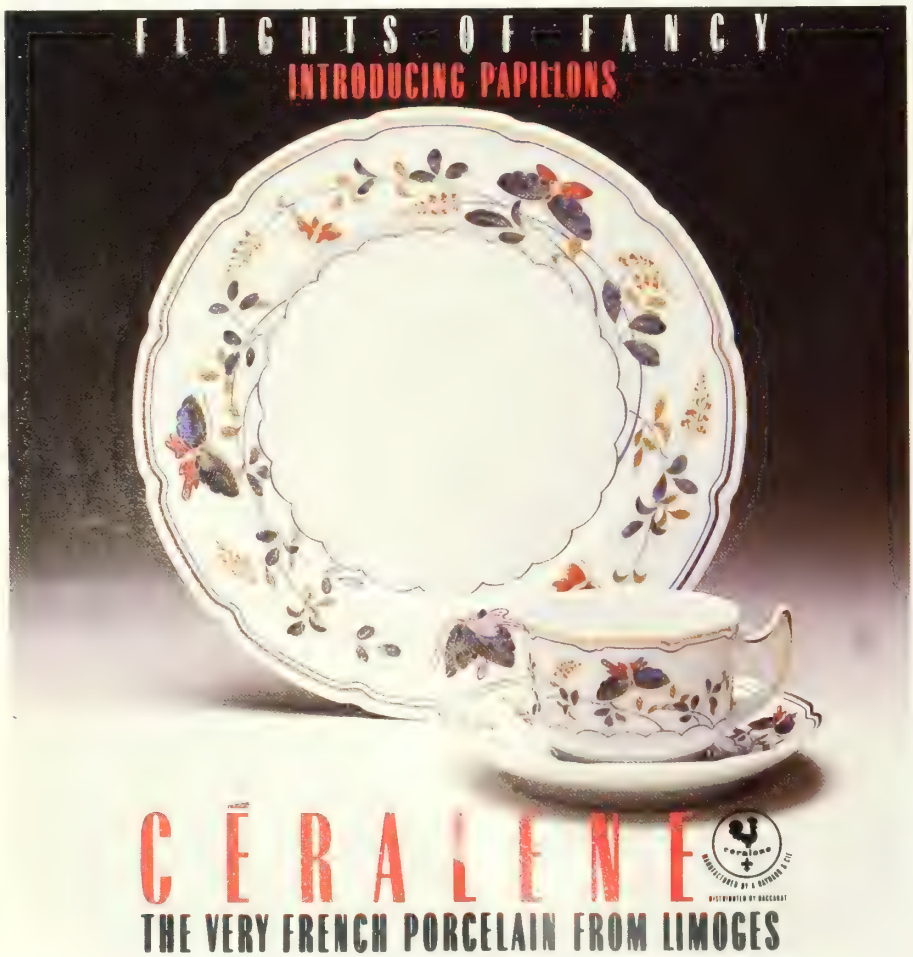
these words fortissimo for about ten minutes thereafter, Price intervened and asked her what "age-space" she was "in." "Six," she snapped back, eliciting gasps of admiration and envy from her audience, many of whom were anxious to follow her in the hot seat and were perhaps less skilled at pinpointing the date of traumatic memories. "Tell Daddy you are afraid of him," Price suggested, and she did. "Now tell Daddy you need and want him," and she did. "And now alternate, experiment: say to Daddy, 'I want you,' 'I hate you,' 'I need you,' 'I don't need you,' 'I hate you.'" Then he placed his forearm against her knees (which at this stage were brought up to her chin in the manner of one of the inmates at Charenton) and asked her to "externalize" her predicament by first pushing the arm away and then drawing it close to her. In time, she produced a library of memories of such staggering dullness that it gradually became clear as day that her original complaint against Daddy had just been thrown in for glamour and that the real bone she wanted to pick with him was that he failed to adopt a "nonjudgmental" approach to her academic studies. Sensing that I had been taken in by a consummate con-artist (or two) and noting with delight that the dials on my watch nearly signified the hour of my departure, I stood up to leave; as I did so, she was reciting on Price's instruction pat little phrases like "I can get attention from you without feeling pushed" to the men in the room, each by turn, and was presently murmuring it coquettishly to a young man who, I had heard earlier, had recently been the target of a missile of hot food thrown by a man with whose wife he had been dallying. Soon I was being driven through the Institute compound on the way back to the rockslide, and was once more ankle-deep in mud as I journeyed to meet the Cadillac on the other side. The moment I was out of view of the contingent that had driven me to the slide I furiously hurled the handfuls of promotional literature they had pressed on me into the tempestuous sea with a sobbing laugh. Funny how one can summon the full force of one's personality to get certain things done without the aid of juice fasts or afterlife experiences. □

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By Brooke Hayward



An Ashanti and an English root chair frame Picasso's *Femme Endormie,* 1932; Bud Holland perches on 1925 André Groult table in front of Roman bronze fragments, second century A.D

In the world of the last 25 years, a world of rapidly expanding materialism on every front, dealers have become the gurus of the affluent. Such a man is Bud Holland, a native Chicagoan, who does not much like to travel beyond the boundaries of his city. Since his stock comes from all over the world and roughly the third millennium B.C. to the present, this poses an interesting problem. Bud shrugs. He has scouts everywhere with whom he maintains constant communication.

Randomly deployed throughout the warehouse-size gallery the day I visited: a Louis Majorelle lady's desk, a Gerrit Rietveld 1918 Red and Blue chair, a set of Josef Hoffmann parlor furniture inherited by the grandson of its first owner, complete with two armchairs, footstools, and a settee, all in their original upholstery, a tenth-century Jain torso, an eleventh-century Khmer Vishnu, a massive desk by Maurice Dufrène (with an elephant-hide top and hardware by Edgar Brandt, and a veneer of Macassar ebony cross-banded with ivory). Also by Edgar Brandt, a leading French ironsmith of the twenties, was a chandelier with eight glass shades by Daum of Nancy. There was a self-portrait by Carlo Bugatti in a hat, two of his polychrome hall chairs, circa 1900, inlaid with pewter and brass, which had vellum seats and backs painted by Pellegrini, and his mirrored hanging wall cabinet with dragonfly pulls, so bizarre it defies description. Mixed in with these things were two little Picassos from 1906, some drawings by Matisse, Bonnard, and Jackson Pollock, and a pair of stone third- or fourth-century book ends from Gandhara carved into lions' heads. Then there were the tex-



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tiles: pre-Columbian, Coptic, Indonesian, ceremonial skirts of the Kuba in Zaire up to 25 feet in length, and Tibetan rugs that were tiger-striped or leopard-spotted.

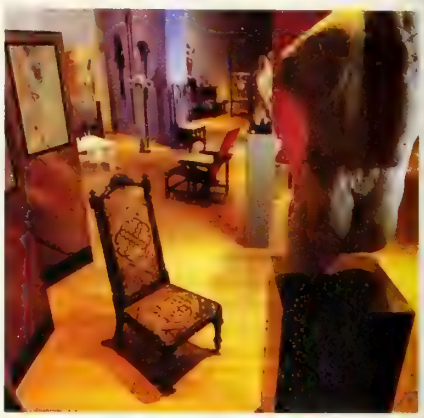
After studying the contents of four thousand square feet of luxurious gallery space ("The theory," says Holland, "is that you're entering someone's home")—the two display rooms for paintings, the vast object room, the restoration room, the well-equipped kitchen, and the bathroom papered in lizard-skin-stamped Mylar—I promptly showed my approval by deciding to buy a standing turbaned and mustachioed temple figure from Rājastān. Well actually, first I asked another dealer from London, Kasmin, who knows about these things, to have a look as he happened to be going to the Art Fair in Chicago. A few days later he called very excitedly to tell me to go ahead with my purchase by all means, and tell me furthermore he had been unable to resist a second-century fragment: a red sandstone Kushan arm and hand of heroic proportions that had once belonged to a Buddha.

Irving Blum, who deals only in twentieth-century art—mainly from the sixties on—talks about Holland with more than a trace of admiration in his voice:

"Lurking in every dealer's heart is the basic fantasy he can sell anything, that he has the ability to pursue, and subsequently to deal with, any exotic interest. However, in truth, almost all get locked into a single specialty. The astonishing thing about Bud, to me, is that wherever his attention wanders so does his business. He can become engaged in something he's never done before, become an expert in it, isolate it, and integrate it into his career. He will educate himself and then educate his clients. That, more than anything else, defines Bud Holland's uniqueness."

Holland's original training was in jewelry design and gemology. He grew up wanting to be a jeweler the way some kids want to be firemen. After a stint as a bomber pilot in World War II, he got his wish. Shortly thereafter he began studying photography at the Institute of Design in Chicago, a passion long since abandoned. Then, in the fifties came rugs—Oriental rugs, particularly Turkish village rugs, a genre that had no following at all ("I sometimes think of myself as a dealer in unfashionable things . . ."). And also in the fifties, paintings, which he learned about from Aaron Siskind who was involved with the New York School of painters.

"New York, in those days, was like being in Paris in 1912. Very exciting time. Franz Kline took my only $800 away from me, sold me one of his very best paintings, huge, that I kept brooding in my basement for a long while. At that time I didn't have two quarters to rub together, but I scraped up enough money to buy a beautiful 1957 Philip Guston, and I had a fine de Kooning. A couple of these paintings went in order to allow me to go into business later on. But I still have the Guston . . ."



A view of the gallery with Roman torso and a Victorian chair in foreground.

In the early sixties, as a note of chic began to creep into the art world and there was talk of this year's or last year's paintings, Holland resisted. "I went backwards instead of forwards, backwards into the earlier part of the twentieth century. Instead of taking up Pop Art, I became involved with Cubism, Constructivism, Dada, Surrealism, and Abstract Expressionism. That's where I felt my work ended. After that it was someone else's game."

At the same time, Holland's interest in Oriental rugs led to a broader interest in Islamic artifacts, then to objects in general—that is to say anything that is not a rug or a painting—and ultimately to furniture ("anything not eighteenth-century French or English 'serious brown furniture,' let's say from Carlo Bugatti forward"), although it is only recently that he's had the space to display it.

"Now I can indulge myself in my

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historic walls,



...surely, Schumacher.

own eccentric outlook toward these things. But I'm narrowing my range—from absolutely everything, to, well, a stylistic and cultural range covering the last five thousand years."

Holland can also, to use his own words, indulge himself in the luxury of doing business only with people he likes. He keeps it simple: a couple of assistants, no advertising, no walk-in traffic, appointments only, everything short of an unlisted phone number. He is a contradiction, at once modest and proud, who regards himself as nothing more or less than a provincial art dealer, albeit one who has standards and believes in quality ("I'm not just doing this to make a buck"). He has neither the time nor the patience for clients who annoy him. And his greatest curse is reserved for whatever it is that constitutes the currently fashionable.

"We would like to think we're searching for eternal verities, but in the end, fashion suffuses everything. Sometimes I examine my motivations. Am I trying to be a tastemaker—or what? I know a lot of things that used to look good to me no longer do. Others do, or look better. I'd like to find out which things have stood the test of time, which are really sublime . . ."

I couldn't help wondering what his home looked like, what, if anything, he collected. Holland was typically nonchalant. He ventured to say that he "accumulates," whimsically, retaining for his own pleasure those things he isn't able to sell in the gallery, like, for instance, antique folding knives. This way he doesn't suffer from the average dealer's ambiguity about whether to keep or sell great material. Still, he's managed to stash away some first-class Régence and twelve Bugatti dining chairs caparisoned with leather and fringe. But what to do for the appropriate dining table? Or should it be tables? And he continues to ponder the notion of a trompe-l'oeil domed ceiling over all, in the style of Piranesi. I'm keeping my fingers crossed.

In the meantime, Holland's ruminations lead him to conclude: "Of all the world's expensive things that I have tampered with on one level or another, nothing has given me more lasting pleasure than a few sticks of good furniture. I've got a couple of sticks . . . and they're wonderful." □

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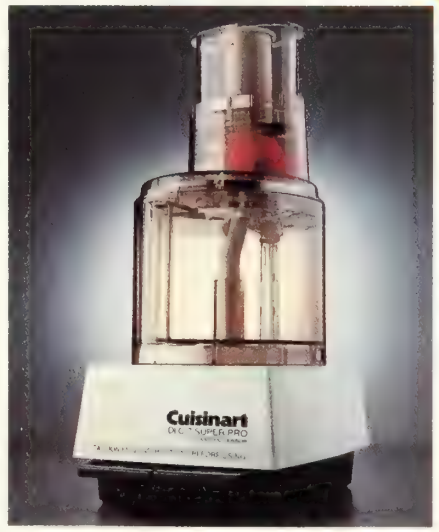
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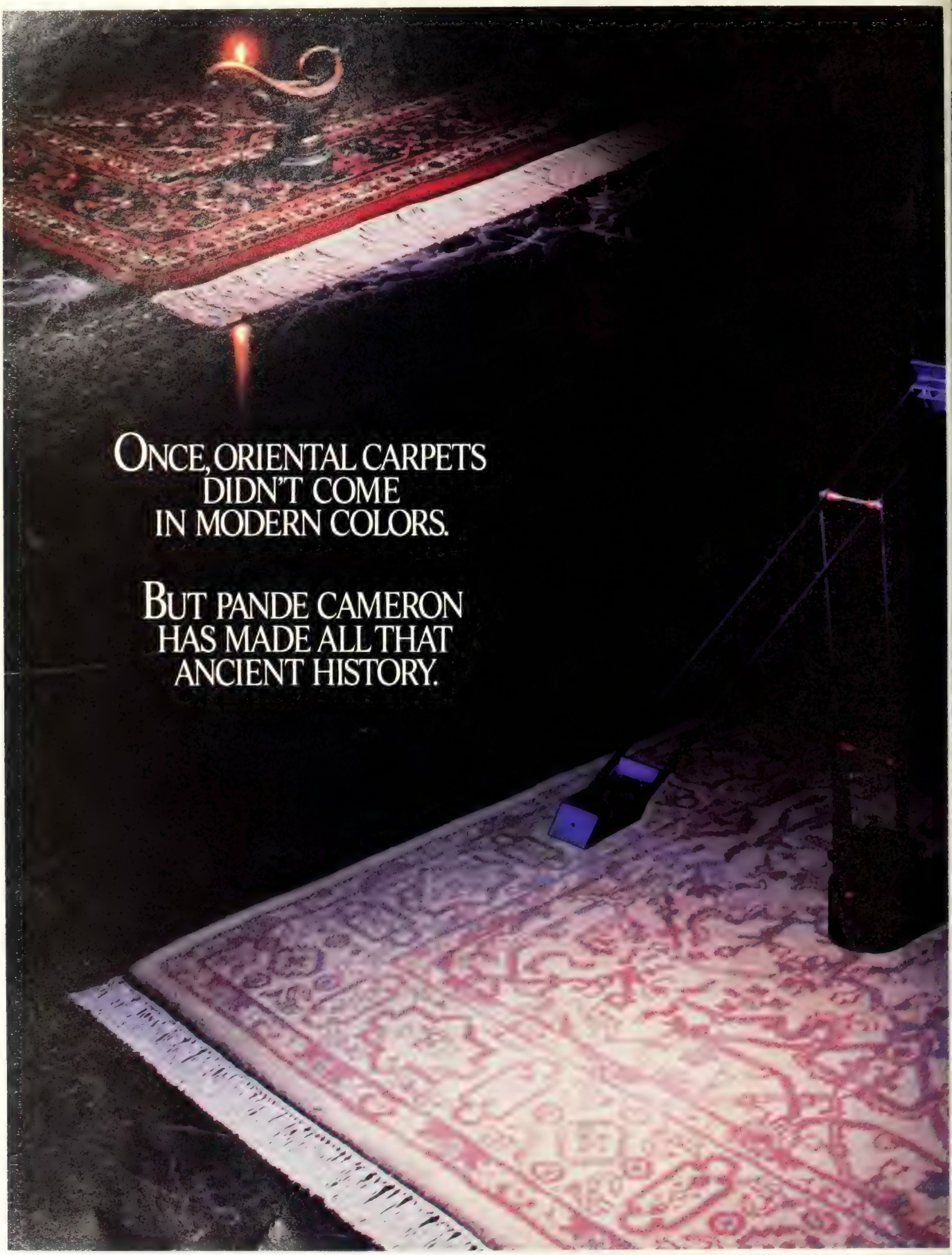


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THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE

Experiencing the lives of other people's houses

By Alastair Reid

Having been, for many years, an itinerant, living in an alarming number of countries and places, I am no stranger to other people's houses. I am aware of a certain disreputable cast to this admission; I can almost feel my wizened little ancestors shaking their heads and wringing their hands, for in Scotland, people tend to go from the stark stone house where they first see the light to another such fortress, where they sink roots and prepare dutifully for death, their possessions encrusted around them like barnacles. Anyone who did not seem to be following the stone script was looked on as somewhat raffish, rather like the tinkers and traveling people who sometimes passed through the village where I grew up. I would watch them leave, on foot, over the horizon, pulling their worldly belongings behind them in a handcart; and one of my earliest fantasies was to run away with them, for I felt oppressed by permanence and rootedness, and my childhood eyes strayed always to the same horizon, which promised other ways of being, a life less flinty and predictable.

My errant nature was confirmed by a long time I spent at sea during the Second World War, on a series of small, cramped ships, wandering all over the Indian Ocean. Then I learned that the greatest advantage was to have as little as possible, for anything extra usually got lost or stolen, and we frequently had to shoulder our worldly goods, from ship to ship. The habit stuck—today I have next to no possessions, and I have closed the door on more houses and apartments than I can remember, leaving behind what I did not immediately need. If I had a family crest, it should read *omnia mea mecum porto* (all that is mine I carry with me); but it would get left behind.

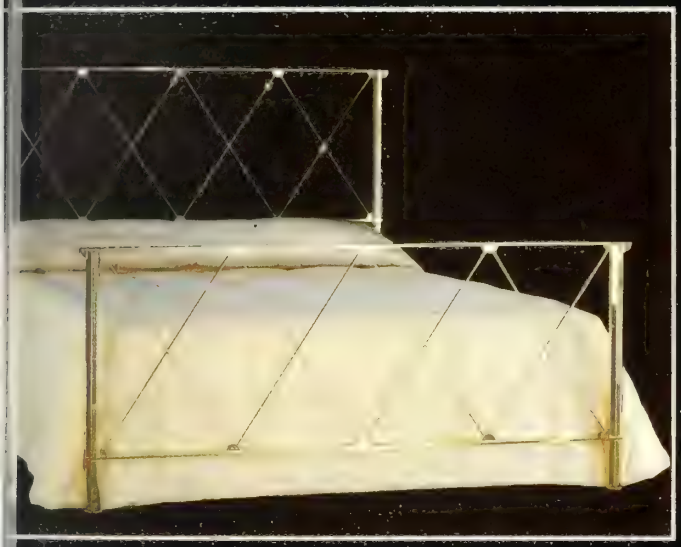


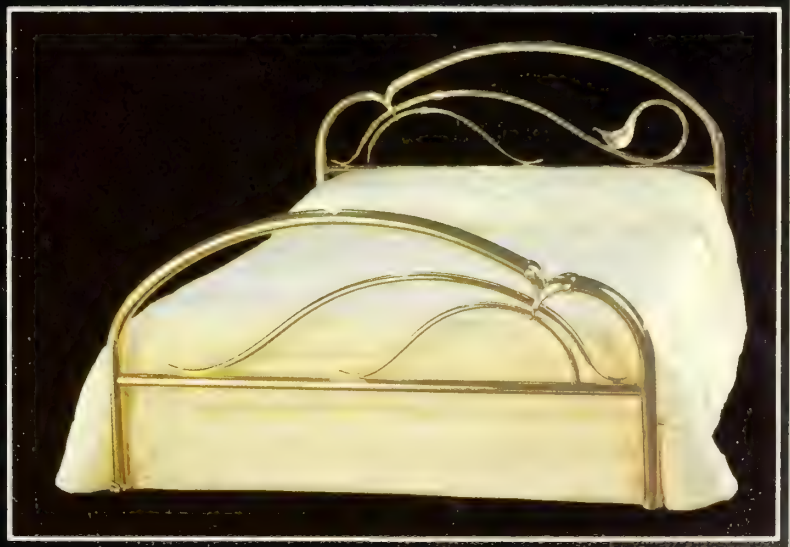
Alastair Reid in a friend's New York apartment in the fifties

Innocent in themselves, houses can be given quite different auras, depending on the dispositions of their occupants—they can be seen as monuments to permanence, or as temporary shelters. In Scotland, you find abundant examples of the first on the fringes of small towns, standing in well-groomed gardens, their brasses gleaming, their blinds half-drawn like lowered eyelids, domestic museums served by near-invisible slaves. When I first came to the United States, I felt it to be immediately liberating, in its fluidity, its readiness to change. Few people lived in the place they were born, moving held no terrors, and renting was the norm. Yet people inhabited their temporary shelters as though they might live there forever; and paradoxically, I felt at home. When I began to spend a part of each year in Spain, my other adopted country, I rented a series of sturdy peasant houses devoid of decoration, with whitewashed walls and tile floors, and no furnishings beyond the essentials of beds, tables, cross, and chairs. It was a time when a number of unanchored people came to rest in Spain—painters for the light, writers for the silence—setting up working outposts in the sun, whose constant presence does simplify existence. Within these anonymous white walls, one re-created one's own world—essential books and pictures, whatever other transforming elements lay to hand.

In Spain, I grew very aware of houses as presences—perhaps the residual aura of those who had lived lifetimes in them, perhaps a peculiarity of the space they enclosed. I recall visiting









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a house in Mallorca in the company of Robert Graves, and hearing him, after only a few minutes in the house, making peremptory excuses to leave. "Didn't you feel the bad luck in that house?" he said to me once we were out of earshot. With time, I came to feel what he meant, not in terms of good or bad luck, but of feeling welcome or unwelcome in the houses themselves, apart from the inhabitants.

Of all writers, Vladimir Nabokov read the interiors of other people's houses much as psychics read palms or tarot cards: with a wicked accuracy, he would decipher absent owners from the contents of rooms, from shelves, pictures, and paraphernalia. When he lectured at Cornell University, it was his practice, instead of having a house of his own, to rent the houses of others absent on sabbatical; and behind him already was a wandering life of exile in England, Germany, and France, in rented premises. Summers he spent in pursuit of butterflies, in motels across the United States; and when, with recognition, he came to rest, it was in a hotel apartment in Montreux, Switzerland. These various houses and interiors inhabit his books as vividly as living characters—he is always making precise connections between people and the places they choose to live in, between objects and their owners. His *Look at the Harlequins!* is a positive hymn to other people's houses.

I know just what he means. The act of inhabiting and humanizing a house, of changing it from impersonal space to private landscape, is an extremely complex one, a series of careful and cumulative choices; and, in living in other people's houses, one lives among their decisions, some inspired, others hardly thought through. I make for the bookshelves with a crow of expectation, for the books, however miscellaneous or specialized they may be, always yield up at least a handful I have never read, or even heard of, and traveling has deprived me of the possibility of keeping a library, beyond a shelf of essential or immediate reading. Kitchens are a less calculable adventure. Some of them are like shrines, where cooking has been raised to a level of high art, and invite culinary adventure; others, incomprehensibly, are as bare as hospital labs in plague-prone countries, their refrigerators bearing no more than a few viruses flourishing in jars, two or three bottles to what can only be assumed to be an antidote.

At one point in our lives, my son and I lived in London, on a houseboat we actually owned, though temporarily, moored at Cheyne Walk, in Chelsea. We had three special friends, families that lived in other parts of London; and we came to an arrangement with them to exchange houses from time to time, for appropriate weekends. We had a loose agreement—we left behind clean sheets and towels, a "reasonable amount" of food and drink, and, for the curious, some correspondence that could be read. We all relished these unlikely vacations, since we left one another elaborately written guidebooks, and we could take in another part of London—markets, greengrocers, pubs, restaurants. I often wonder why people never think of doing that oftener, except at the wrong times.

In our travels, my son and I occupied rented houses and apartments from Barcelona to Buenos Aires. He can remember every one of them in detail, down to its sounds—the creak and shudder of the houseboat as it rose off the Thames mud on the incoming tide, a house in Chile with a center patio cooled by the cooing of doves, a cottage in Scotland in a wood of its own, guarded by a cranky tribe of crows, and the small mountain house in Spain that was our headquarters. Moving was like putting on different lives, different clothes, and we changed easily, falling in with the ways of each country, eating late in Spain, wearing raincoats in Scotland, carrying little from one place to another except the few objects that had become talismans, observing the different domestic rites—of garden and kitchen, mail and garbage.

Since the fifties, I have lived off-and-on in many different parts of New York, but very intermittently, since I came and went from Spain and from Scotland, never settling decisively in any one of the three. This fall, I returned from a summer spent in Scotland with no apartment—I had given one up before I left, and was expecting another in the spring; but a friend of mine, a dancer, was to be away for a month, and offered me her place in the East Village. I moved in, and took stock.

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felt lucky to me, the kind of apartment you want to stay *in* in, with high windows looking out over St. Mark's churchyard, and light filtered in through leaves to a white, high-ceilinged room, with about a third of the books new to me, and a long Indian file of records. I fell in happily with the place, explored the neighborhood, and found its Meccas—a Ukrainian butcher shop, pawnshops fat with the appliances of yesteryear, small Indian restaurants that looked as though they might fold themselves up after dinner and silently steal away. I made half-hearted attempts to find a more lasting sublet—buying *The Village Voice* early on Wednesdays, marking up the *Times* real-estate section on Sunday and then losing it—but that place made me immune to urgency, although St. Mark's chimed the hours in my ear.

One evening, I was having dinner with a friend of mine, a camerawoman, who lives in a loft in SoHo. She moves fast and often, and always seems to be attached to the ends of five or six active wires, so when we have dinner, we have a lot of ground to cover. Over dessert, she suddenly sat up straight. "By the way, I have to shoot in Arizona most of October. Do you know anyone who would stay in my loft and look after my cats?" We made a deal there and then; and, in a flash, I could see the shape of fall changing. Looking out reflectively on the churchyard the following morning, I realized that I was ideally equipped to be an itinerant. I have an office at *The New Yorker* magazine, where I keep books and papers, get my mail, and do my writing, when the time is upon me. What furniture remained to me now graced my son's apartment, and I was portable, to the tune of two small bags. I was in touch with other itinerants, some of whom would likely be going somewhere; and I was myself leaving for South America after Christmas, until the spring. So I dropped the *Voice,* and went back to reading Michel Tournier's *Friday and Robinson: Life on Esperanza Island,* my latest bookshelf discovery.

I had never lived in SoHo, and my translation there in October opened it up to me. I had to have a small course of initiation, in the hand elevator, in the fistful of keys, in the cats, and then I saw my friend off in a welter of camera gear—a less portable profession, hers,

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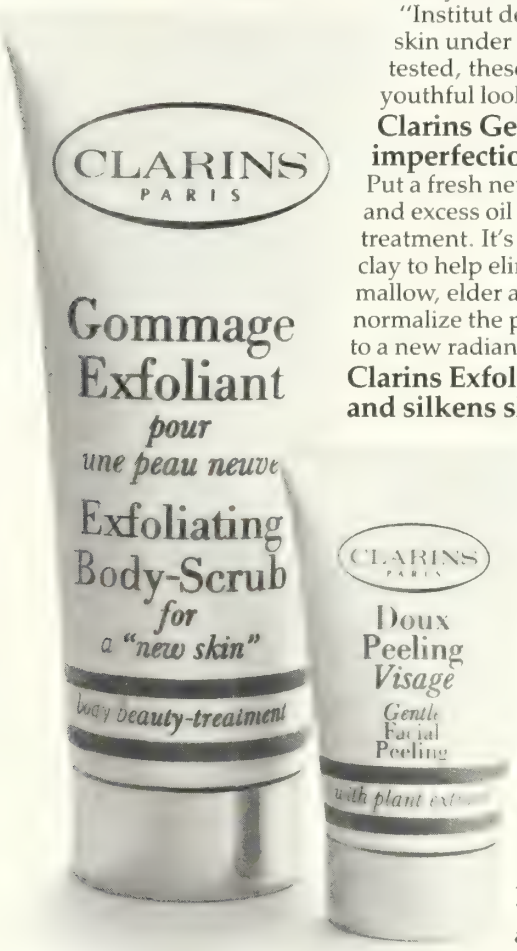
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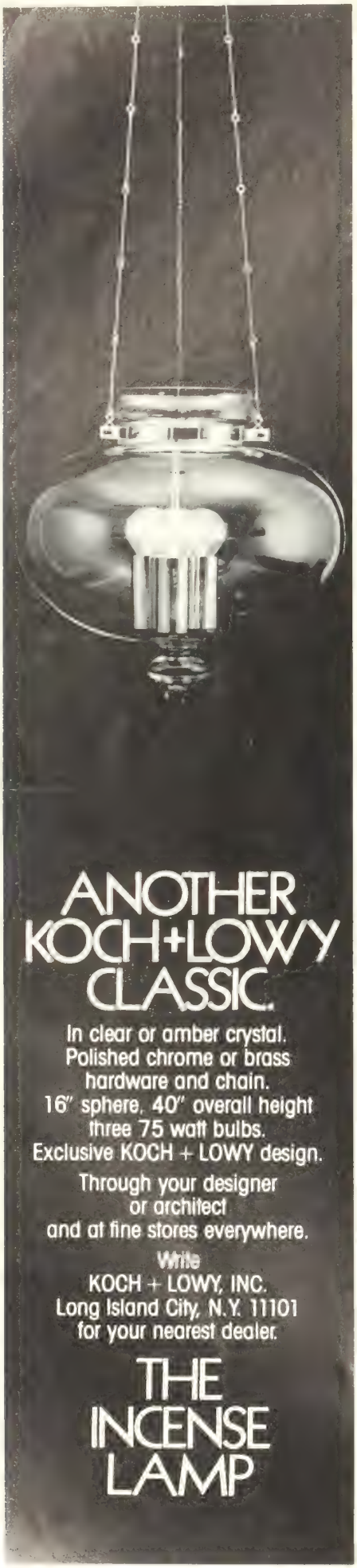
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compared to writing. But then, I have always given thanks that I did not play the harp. The cats. Alvin, the boss-cat was called, a massive, broad-shouldered animal who looked as if he might lift weights in secret. Sadie, his sidekick, was smaller and dumber, but she simpered and purred, which Alvin never did.

Every morning, I fed them first thing, grinding up liver, cleaning their dishes; and when I came back in the evening, they would collar me and drive me toward their empty bowls. The first Saturday, Alvin got through plastic, paper, and close to a pound of sole when I wasn't looking, about an hour after his ample breakfast. But cats are unpunishable by nature, and we came to terms, which meant that I fed them just enough to keep them from breaking into those nerve-rending cries of simulated starvation. Cats in SoHo have about the best life going, I concluded, in a loft that must have seemed like an Olympic complex to them, with me to do the shopping. Sometimes I wished they would go out jogging. But I found I could take a brisk walk without leaving the loft, and there was cable television, which kept me up the first couple of nights. Out in the street I learned to stroll all over again, and I connected up SoHo with the rest of Manhattan. I even took to working there, learning how Alvin and Sadie spent their day.

By then, I had come to count on what John Osborne once called "the blessed alchemy of word of mouth," that most human of networks, and it put me in touch with a poet-friend, who was to be away giving readings for a spell in November. Could I stay and look after their plants? Unlike Alvin and Sadie, the plants fed slowly, in a slow seep; and I grew attached to one small fern which required drowning every day, and which rewarded me with new green. Their apartment was in the West Village, the part of New York I have lived in most. The stores were familiar, the kitchen a pleasure to cook in, the books unsurpassable, almost all of them good to read or reread. You can count on poets. Eerily enough, I had stayed in the same apartment once before, on a quick visit from Spain in the sixties, when other friends occupied it. Now it was dressed altogether differently; but every so often, I caught a whiff of its old self and experienced a time-warp, with the kind of involuntary start that often becomes a poem in the end.

As my days there were beginning to be countable, another friend called me, a woman who writes often on Latin America. She was going to Honduras quite soon, and she had two questions: Did I know anyone in Tegucigalpa? Did I know anyone who wanted to rent her apartment for December, while she was gone? Yes to both questions; and, a couple of weeks later, I gave her two addresses in exchange for her keys.

There was, however, a spell in November, between cats, plants, and travels, and also between apartments, when I was saved from the streets by being able to find a room on the Upper East Side. I was finishing a piece on writing at the time, working a long day; but even so I never became a familiar of the Upper East Side, never have. It is hardly itinerants' territory. People don't stroll much there—they seem more purposive, and you have to know where the stores are. You don't stumble on them. It was getting difficult, too, with the subways—I had to think, really *think*, where I was living, Uptown or Downtown, not to go hurtling on the subway in a wrong though familiar direction.

My last resting place lay on the Upper West Side, also a new territory to me, since I have always thought of 45th Street as the Northern Frontier. It was, however, a revelation. There were oases of movie theaters, comforting even though I never went inside, plenty of odd stores to stumble on, and the neighborhood, to my delight, was Spanish-speaking, even rich in Dominicans, the pleasantest people in Christendom. Moreover, a number of people I had always thought of as out of range turned out to live around the corner. I had had a hasty airport call from my Honduras-bound landlady that morning. "Just pile the papers so you can walk around," she told me tersely. Indeed, her apartment looked as though the negotiations over the Panama Canal had just been hastily concluded in it.

I cleared a camping space first, and then I put the place in order. I have a stern morality about occupying other people's houses: I feel they have to be left in better shape than I find them,

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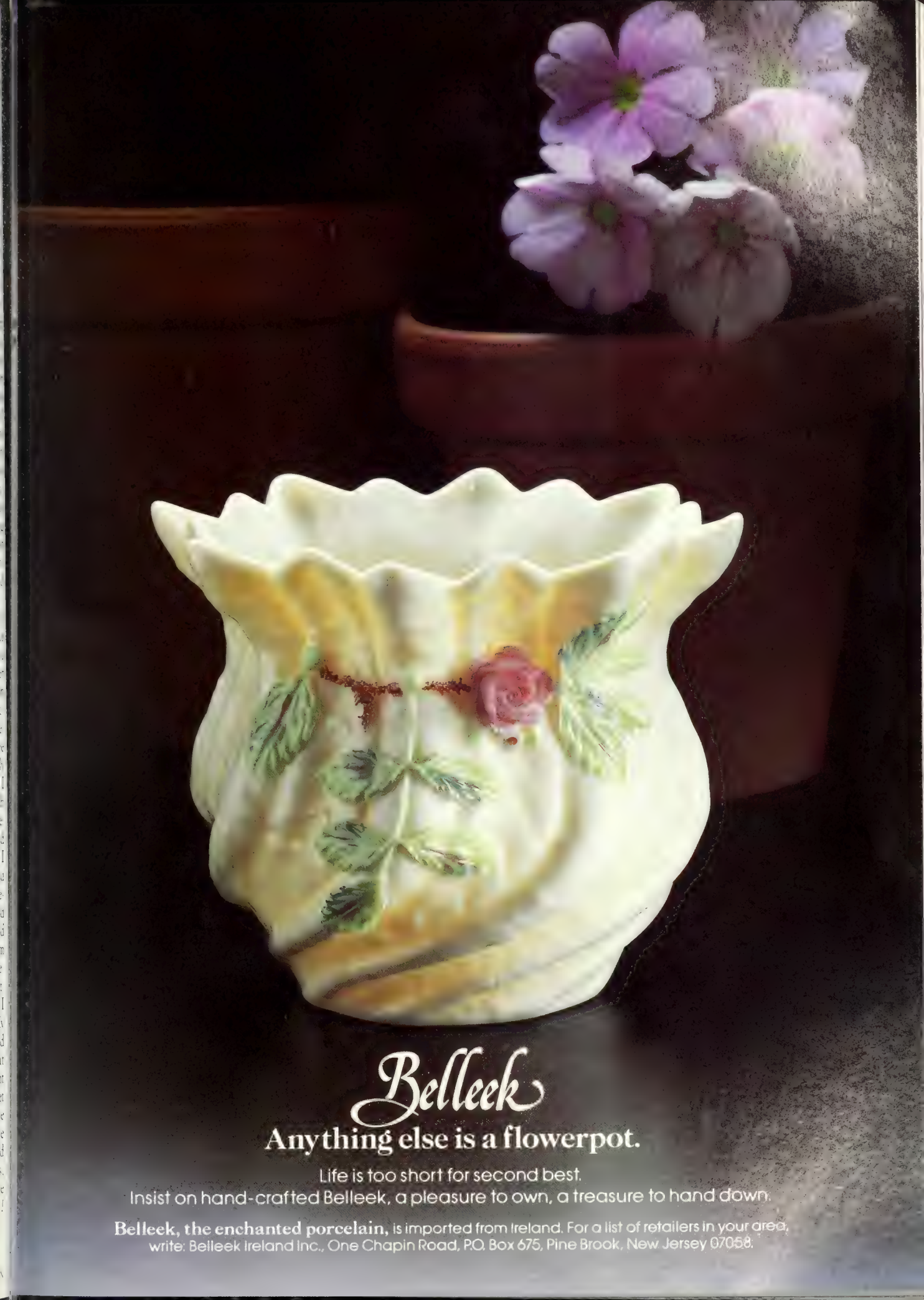
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and this may mean fixing faucets or supplying anything missing, from light bulbs to balloons. What her apartment needed was restoring to its original order, now only skeletally visible. Anyone who tries to keep up with Central America these days acquires a weekly layer of new information, and her layers went back a few months. When I had the papers rounded up and corralled, the books and records in their shelves and sleeves, the cups and glasses steeping, the place began to emerge and welcome me, and I found, under the sofa, an Anne Tyler novel I had not read. One thing did puzzle me: as I cleaned, I came everywhere on scatters of pennies, on the floor, on chairs, on desk and table, by the bed. I could not account for their ubiquity, but I gathered them in a jar, about enough to buy a good dinner. Christmas was coming to the Upper West Side, with great good cheer; but so was the cold weather, so I went one morning, and booked my air ticket.

Before I left the city, I retraced my wanderings of the fall, which felt like going home again and again. If you have lived in somebody's house, after all, you have acquired a lot in common with them, a lot to talk about, to the eccentricities of their pipes and the behavior of their furniture. The tree house by St. Mark's looked properly seasonal, with a fire burning. I find I can still occupy it in my head, with pleasure. I went by the West Village, sat talking for hours in the kitchen, and then walked down to SoHo, where I called on Alvin and Sadie, who looked keenly to see if I had brought fish before withdrawing to rest up. I dropped off a winter coat with my son, and made for the airport and the warm weather with my two bags, leaving behind not one city but several, I felt, shedding a cluster of distinct lives. I just had time to call my friend, newly back from Tegucigalpa. Her time had been good, yes, she had talked at length with my friends, the apartment was great, thanks for fixing the closet door, I had turned up things she thought she'd lost, she felt maybe she had caught a bug in Honduras. I asked her about the pennies. "Oh, yes, thanks for picking them up," she laughed. "It's just that I throw the *I Ching* a lot. Have a good trip." □


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HERBERT BAYER

At the Bauhaus he sat at the feet of Klee, and went on to revolutionize twentieth-century graphic design

By Joseph Rykwert





"Great Ideas of Western Man" ad, *left,* for Container Corporation of America, 1960; project, *above,* for industrial fair exhibition pavilion, 1924.

It is not as fashionable to be post- or anti-Modern as it used to be. A good thing too, I suppose, since being either anti- or post-anything is not very rewarding. As long as modernity seemed passé and reprehensible, very little attention was paid to Herbert Bayer's work. And yet he influenced the taste of several generations; what is more, he actually altered the way we look at printed matter, the way we treat books and advertising, the very way in which we read and write.

With two or three of his immediate contemporaries, the Swiss Jan Tschichold and the Russian El Lissitzky, all three working in Germany, all three of them dandies in their different ways, he transformed the appearance of the printed word. Of the three, Tschichold was almost exclusively concerned with typography—with the book, the occasional publication, a few posters. He repented of his earlier revolutionary tendencies later in life, but his return to "traditional" centered book design was marked by those early experiences. Lissitzky was more the architect-sculptor than the print-designer, though brilliant as both. He returned to the USSR and died in 1941. Bayer was the image maker of that group, and now lives in California—the latter part of his life as influential as anything he did in his Weimar-Berlin days. Arthur Cohen's new and in fact the only monograph on him, *Herbert Bayer: The Complete Works* (MIT Press), which has just appeared, seems to have come at the right moment.

His credentials as a Modernist are impeccable: he was an early Bauhaus student, later a teacher there. Born in 1900, the son of a minor official near Salzburg, in Austria, he had joined the Bauhaus in a rapture of enthusiasm. At the end of the war, demobilized from the Austro-Hungarian army, he started working as a graphic designer in a kind of provincial, sub-Vienna-Secession vein, when a single reading of Kandinsky's *On the Spiritual in Art* (which was then a few years old) and of the Bauhaus Manifesto, which was quite

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new, sent him hitchhiking to Weimar to sit at the feet of the various masters. From the outset, he was both a painter and a typographer; he managed to combine the two apparently effortlessly. Very soon, not only Kandinsky but also Klee entranced him.

Typography was not overwhelmingly important to most of the early Bau-



Herbert Bayer in his studio

haus teachers: that Bauhaus manifesto Bayer had read in Salzburg was very conventionally designed. Yet, by 1920 the printed word had been broken up, splintered, even smashed by the experiments of the Futurists and the Dadaists; it had also been lovingly disassembled by one of the truly great poets of our times, Guillaume Apollinaire, who then put it together into picture-poems of enormous intensity and humor. A few years later the German bureaucracy also standardized paper sizes; and with this "rationalization" the graphic designers of the time reorganized the way in which the printed word was laid out on the page, and introduced the asymmetrical layout that we now take for granted in advertising as well as in books. From the printing workshop at the Bauhaus, which in effect he founded in 1925, Bayer led the campaign to rationalize, which to him also meant abandoning the use of upper-case letters. It is worth remembering that standard German practice at the time was to begin *every* noun with a capital letter. Bayer has stuck to his guns, and insists on this usage for his own writings, allowing only the capital "I," since he finds it visually offensive in lower case when it is isolated.

All this time Bayer was also painting;

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See page 242

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his style was inevitably influenced by his Bauhaus colleagues, by the Surrealists (however superficially) but also the Italian Metaphysical painters. Inevitably too, letter-forms entered his pictures and sometimes even dominated them. As a painter he has been undervalued; perhaps because some of the occasional printing (even fancy dress–

He left the Bauhaus at the same time as Gropius, and established himself as a graphic artist in the Berlin branch of an American ad agency

party invitations) at the Bauhaus was so memorable, and is still exhilarating although fifty years and the fantastic outgrowths of advertising have immured us to visual shock. He left the Bauhaus at the same time as Gropius, and established himself as a graphic artist and a designer in the Berlin branch of an American advertising agency, until it became quite clear that the Nazi threat was not a temporary one. All the work of that period is really of a piece. I write conventionally of his paintings and his graphic design, yet he has always maintained, rightly, I think, that there was only a difference of degree between all these doings of his; and in fact he describes himself, when pressed, as a painter.

Among the many memorable images he produced in his Bauhaus days were two exhibition pavilions (one, for a tobacco firm, had a cigarette-shaped chimney blowing smoke rings). There were never any buildings to go with the drawings, but Bayer got his first taste in constructing a three-dimensional design when he worked on the Bauhaus exhibition of 1923. Arriving in New York with no money and little English



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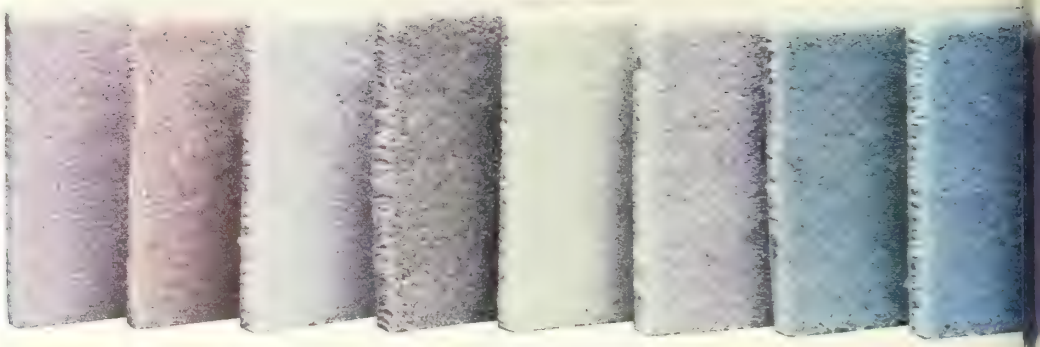
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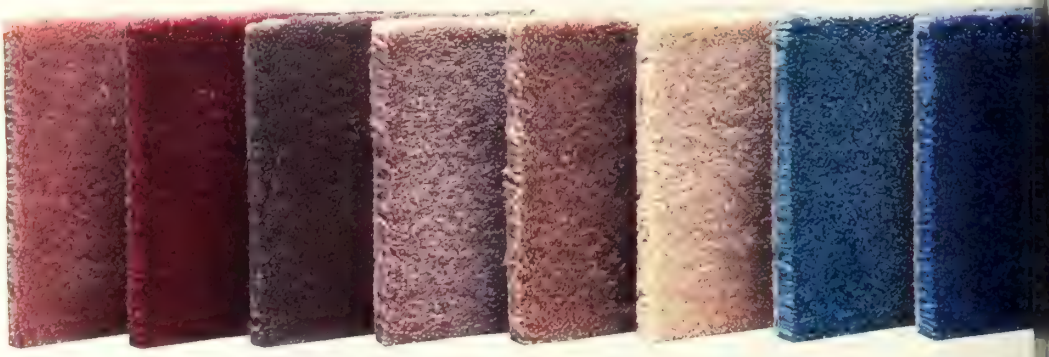
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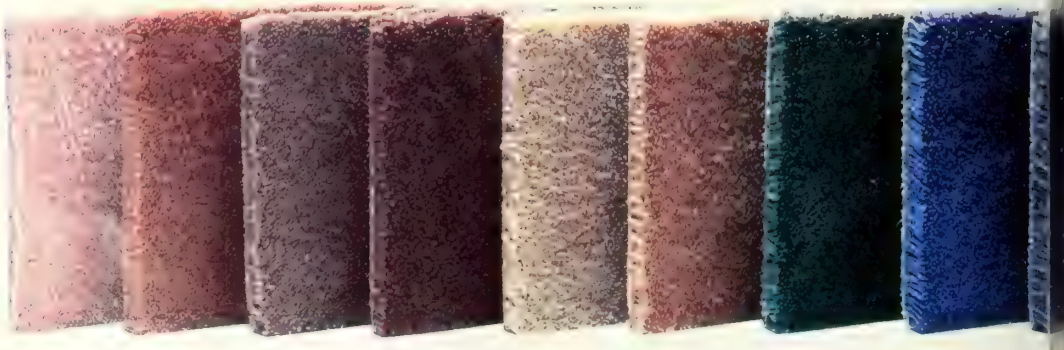
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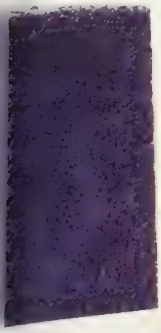


Shown: Blossom Pink



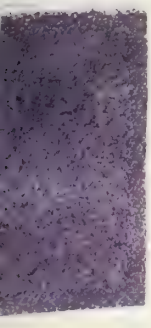


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Shown: Rose Dust

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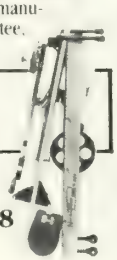
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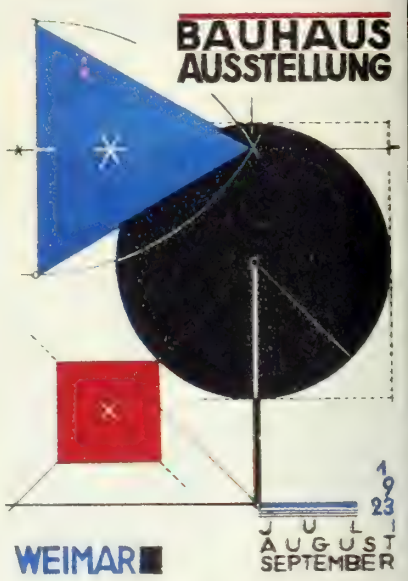
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in 1938, he was immediately mobilized to work on The Museum of Modern Art "Bauhaus" exhibition, perhaps the most influential single exhibition ever to be held anywhere. It was typical of him that he did everything to avoid speaking German after his arrival in New York, partly to learn English quickly and fluently, partly so as to be looking forward, not back. The adaptation to the USA was part of the dandyism: to be daring and tactful at the same time, to maintain your independence, that was the mark of the dandy as Barbey d'Aurevilly saw it a century and a half ago. It has curiously enough determined Bayer's career.

He was *of* the Bauhaus, yet carried out his own campaigns within it. And later in his life he served two major corporations, the Container Corporation of America and Atlantic Richfield; and they too did not subject him: his work



Bayer's postcard announcing Bauhaus Exhibition, 1923, Weimar.

for them became an extraordinary collaboration, in which large tracts of American taste were transformed through advertising, exhibitions—all sorts of printing. Of course wherever American publications were read, which means most of the literate world, they spread his influence. As a measure of his achievement it is worth looking at the Container Corporation's *Atlas*, which appeared in 1953. In the thirty years which followed it has affected the form of maps and atlases all over the



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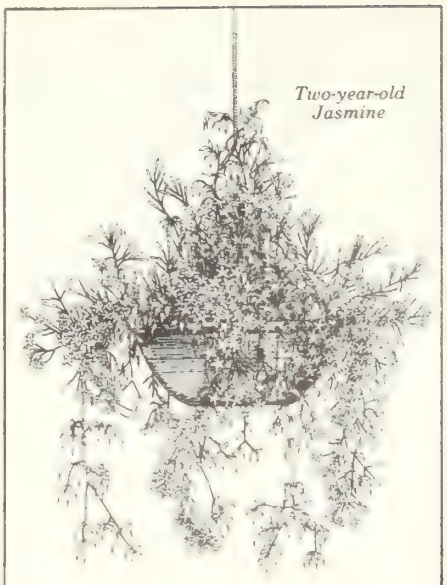
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world. If you look at the pictures painted while the *Atlas* was being prepared, the *Atmospheric Arrows* and the *Exfoliated Landscapes,* they reflect the passion with which he engaged in the cartographic exercise; but the *Stick* paintings he did afterward are in the contrasting, ebullient colors that he had used for the maps. It is not a matter of influence, but of one activity flowing directly into the other.

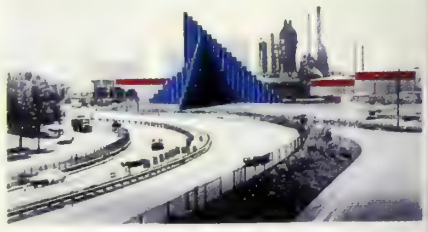
In the same way, he used both his own paintings and letter-forms as part of the design of the buildings with which he was associated. He has of course been asked to "decorate" any number of buildings by others, beginning with Gropius's much-maligned Harkness Graduate Center at Harvard; some have been indifferent, some magnificent. It is interesting that on one of his own buildings, the Health Center at Aspen, the letter-forms, based on an alphabet of his from the thirties, rise higher than the building at the entrance. The building stands in a garden he designed for that roomy Colorado landscape. Lettering, building, and garden draw his many activities together—the shaping of everything from the single letter-form to the earthwork: "earthworks" he treated as something more like sculpture than as exercises in the craft of landscape gardening.

On the same scale are his vast "environmental" sculptures, mostly unexecuted, with which he sought to modify the excesses of industrial depredation of the landscape; they are all part of an integral activity. They antedate, sometimes by several years, the first exercises in Land Art which were to work on a larger scale and toward rather different aims than Bayer's earthworks, to which they are sometimes compared—the difference shows the true nature of his sensibility and says something important about his way of working. Land artists were primarily concerned to show the human imprint on raw nature—sometimes by shifting vast quantities of earth and rock; an imprint visible from the air, astonishing in its arbitrariness to the airman, the motorist, the pedestrian. Bayer's earth sculptures are never irruptive, sensational; he is always concerned, passionately concerned, to reorganize the existing world by harnessing sensibility to reason.

This is in part what I meant when I said that the influence of the Surrealists on his painting had been superficial. Both reason and sensibility are so powerful and subtle that he has not only created a number of individual works of high merit, but he has also helped change the form of our books and newspapers irretrievably; the very letter-forms that have become, through the poster, the neon advertisement, and graffiti an increasingly important part of our visual experience will never recover from his attentions. □







Bayer's range: *The Lonely Metropolitan, left,* photomontage, 1923; *Grass Mound, top right,* 1955, Aspen; *bottom right,* visual improvement project for ARCO Refinery, Philadelphia, 1972.


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GETTING TO THE SAUCE

There's always a way to eat the unknown

By Angelo M. Pellegrini

It was my father's first dinner at the home of his employer, a wealthy French merchant in Marseilles—and his first experience at an aristocrat's dinner table. He was understandably nervous, for in such an environment he was uncertain of his behavior. The vermouth apéritif had been served and dispatched with no difficulty. Father knew well enough how to drink even in the most elegant company. Nor had the appetizers and soup posed any perplexing problem in etiquette. But when the main course was brought to the table, Father was visibly shaken. He was served an individual casserole containing a neatly quartered quail, barely visible in a sauce that immediately sought and found the nostrils of a peasant who knew his bread and wine. The issue was clear-cut: what were the permissible means, at an aristocrat's table, for getting that sauce to the stomach?



Angelo Pellegrini's father, Piacentino, in 1923.

Father was a man who never compromised on food and drink. He was an enlightened peasant gourmet with a remarkable catholicity of taste and an instinctive appreciation of all that is good to eat and drink. Within the confining orbit of a peasant's means, he sought to live a humane life. Even in his work, among the peasants in Tuscany, in the vineyards of Algiers, and in the lumber camps of our own Northwest, he enjoyed the reputation of one who did even the most menial tasks with distinction. The achievement of quality was his preoccupation in everything to which he set his capable hands.

At the dinner table he was really not difficult to please. He enjoyed audibly the simplest fare so long as it had been prepared with reasonable care. Frequently he dined happily on soup, bread, cheese, and fruit; but he insisted that each of these ingredients in the evening meal be the best possible under the circumstances. He could never forgive an unsuccessful loaf of bread, for his standard of achievement completely excluded the possibility of failure in such matters. Nor, for the same reason, could he gracefully pardon Mother for an occasional slip in an otherwise faultless cuisine.

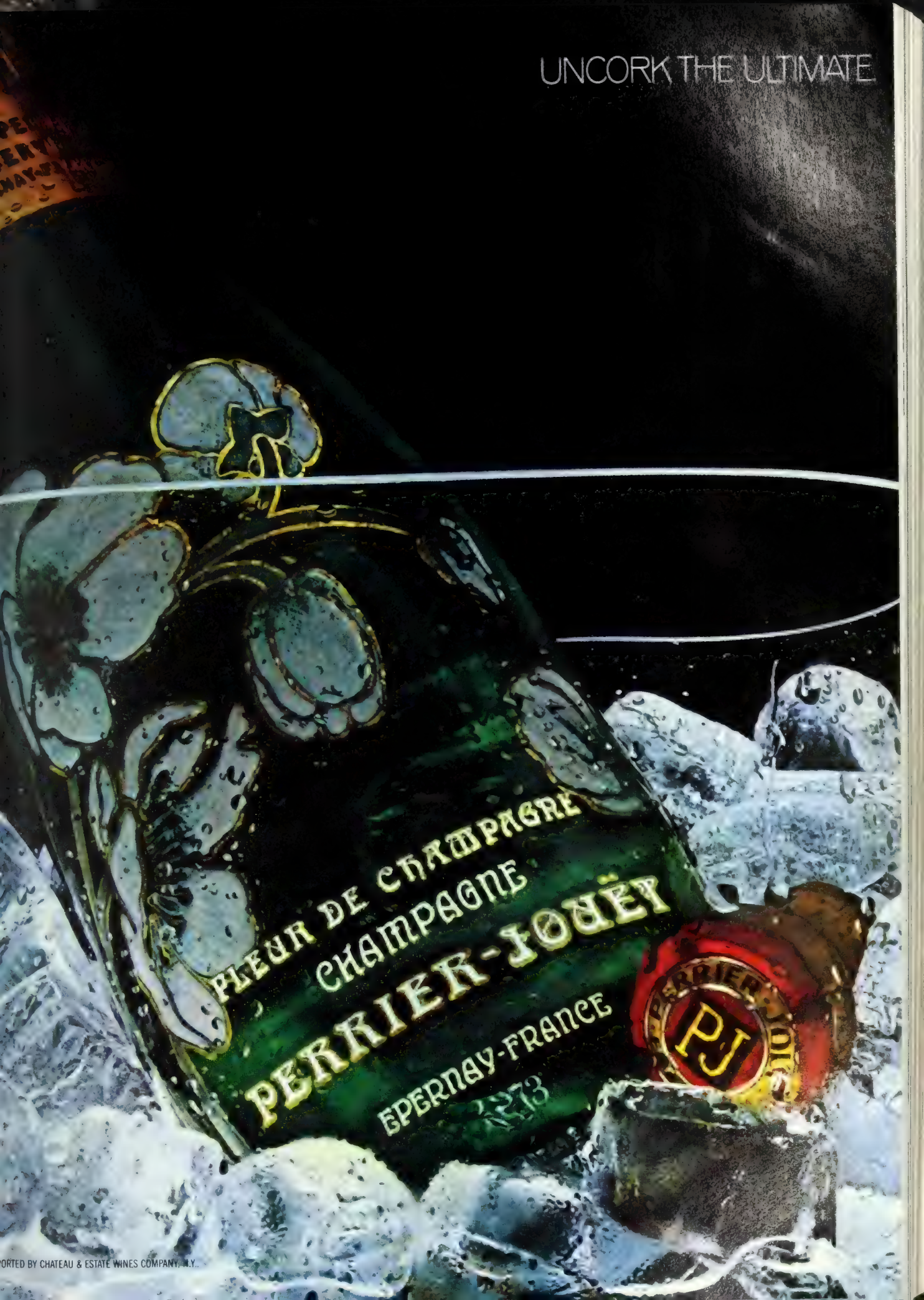
His reaction to food was always unambiguous. An excellent soup, a delicious roast, his favorite vegetable from the garden, would always lift him from a dark mood and unlock his tongue. As he drew his chair to the table, he could tell from the fragrance the quality of what he was about to eat; and when he was pleased by the promise of a good dinner, he became the most infectiously happy man that ever wielded knife and fork. His good humor, released in gaiety, tall stories and happy banter, completely dominated the dinner hour. He was a joy to everyone who watched him as he sucked the bones and ground the more tender ones with his hard white teeth to extract the marrow. His ability to clean a bone and lick the platter clean, always performed with refinement and skill, I have never seen equaled.

His only praise of a dinner that pleased him thoroughly was implicit in the mood that it evoked and the manner in which he gave it to his stomach. Nor did he complain when the fare fell short of his exacting standards. Mother's most frequent aberrations in the kitchen were always explainable in terms of a demoniacal tendency to oversalt. She frequently confessed that when she shook the salt cellar over a dish, an evil power, bent on ruining the home, took possession of her. The consequence was that too often a good soup was ruined by too much salt. But Father was too much the gentleman to make a fuss on such occasions. When he discovered that any part of the dinner had received a reckless benediction of sodium chloride, he became a dark, threatening cloud. His swarthy complexion literally darkened, and without as much as grunting a word of disapprobation, he went to the kitchen sink, spilled the contents of his dish and,



Angelo on Pacific Beach, Washington, 1916

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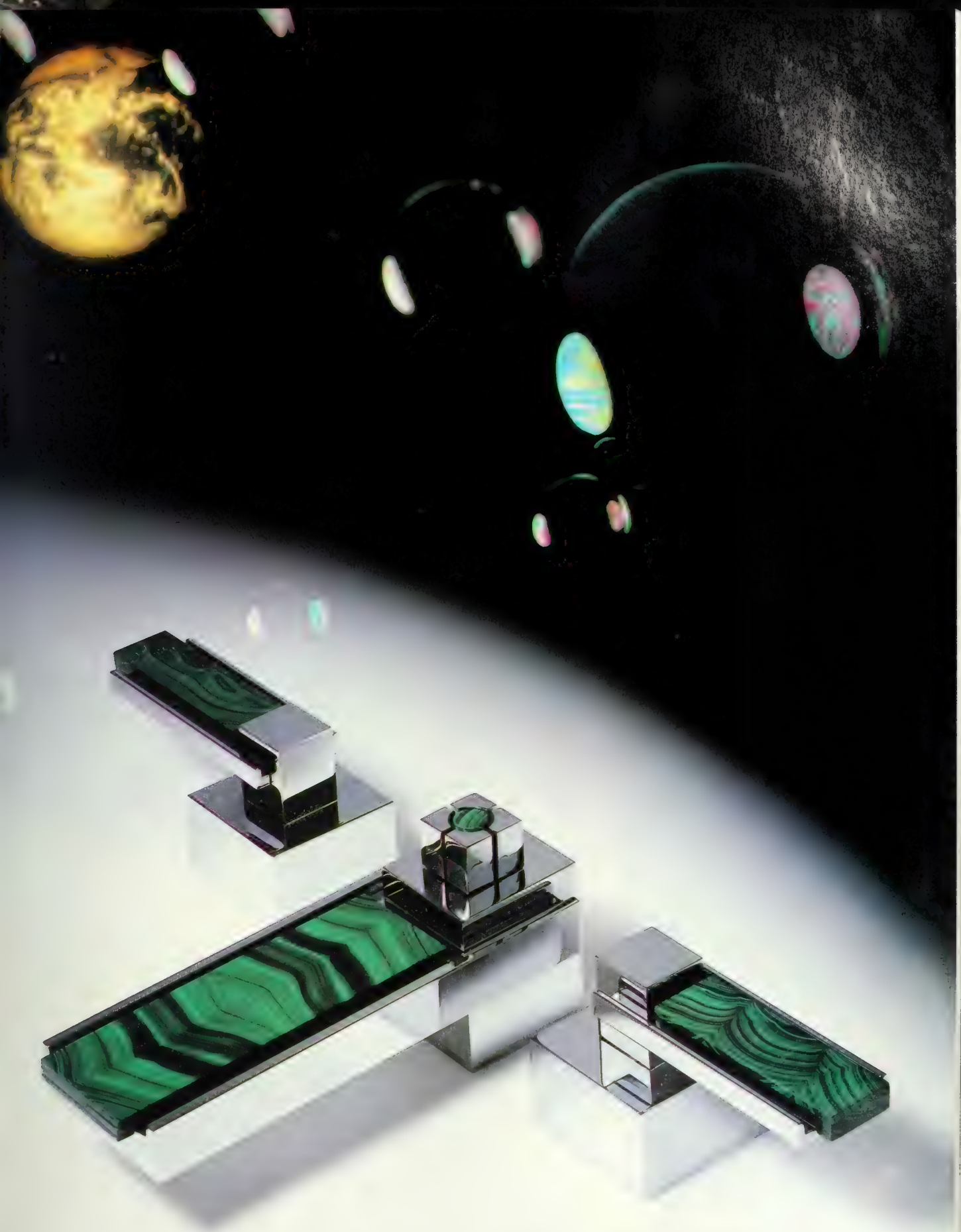
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with ceremonious care, fried himself two eggs and returned to the table. No one in the family heard him utter a word until the next dinner—which, you may be sure, was always good. Men who grumble and growl and swear when a housewife fouls up a recipe should reflect on my father's behavior and look to their manners.

Well! This peasant gourmet found himself, at the age of 35 and after the birth of his third of six children, in the service of M. Charbonnier of Marseilles, France. It was an employment that he had secured through his shrewd and resourceful wife and eminently suited to his temperament, his talents, and his flair for distinguished cuisine.

M. Charbonnier had extensive vineyards in Algiers. My father was em-



The Pellegrini family in Lucca, 1904–05.

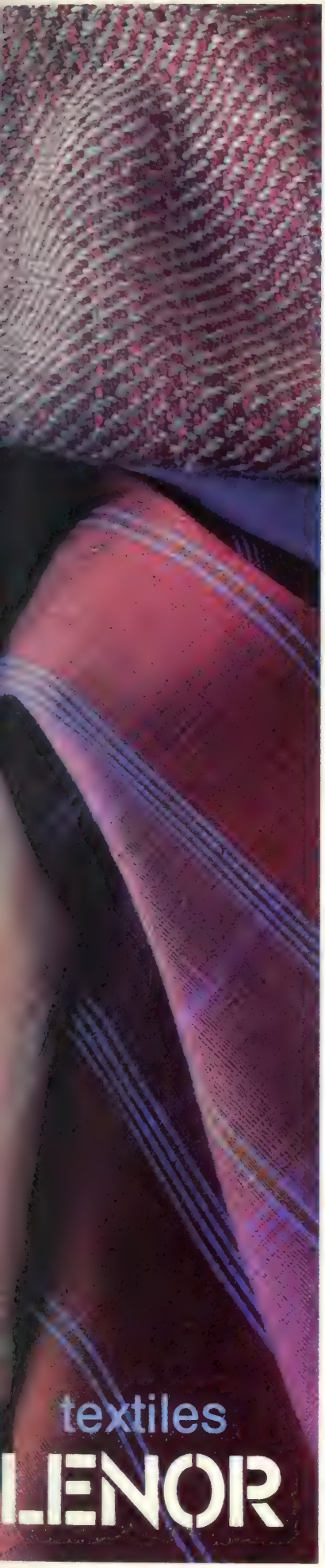
ployed as general supervisor of the vineyard and wine making. His duties entailed frequent visits to his employer's home in Marseilles. Immediately before the vintage he had to consult with his chief about the wines that were to be made. That involved an inventory of the Charbonnier cellar to determine the needs, and a general report on what the vineyard might be expected to yield. When the vintage was completed and the various wines were tucked away in storage cooperage, Father was again expected to cross the Mediterranean for a general report to his employer. In addition to these two visits, there were to be as many others as the competent performance of important duties made necessary.



This pleasant employment lasted from 1906 to 1911, when it was brought to an end by the Italo-Turkish war, September 29, 1911. During the five years that Father was in the service of M. Charbonnier, he lived the life of Riley. He loved his work, to which he brought unusual talents, and he came to love his employer, who was by any standards a Man. After the first year his visits to the Charbonnier residence became primarily excursions into friendship and good food. The war with Turkey called him back to Italy and soon thereafter sent him back to Africa in a corporal's uniform. But this story has to do with his initial dinner at the Charbonnier table.

What were the permissible means, at an aristocrat's table, for getting that sauce to the stomach? Father did some fast thinking. He eliminated the method of sopping it up with his bread, which he could do with extraordinary skill, because he thought that might make a bad impression on his employer and so place his new position in jeopardy. It then occurred to him that he might wait and follow safely the example of his host. But that course of action he dismissed, too, as utterly unsatisfactory. Charbonnier might be the exceptional Frenchman who did not appreciate a good sauce—or he might unduly delay the ingestion until the sauce was cold and therefore unfit to eat. What to do? A glass of Burgundy brought immediate inspiration.

"Monsieur Charbonnier," said my father, "have you ever been told how the Leaning Tower of Pisa was built?" "No," said his host, somewhat startled by a question so completely irrelevant. "Well, it isn't such a mystery as some would have us think," continued my father, visibly haunted by the fumes of the tantalizing sauce. "You know, of course, that the tower is round." As he said this, he took a piece of bread, described a complete circle in the casserole, and stuffed the bread quickly into his mouth. "Oh yes, *completely* round," he added as he repeated the gesture. "Some people can't understand why it leans on one side." He proceeded with some difficulty, as his



mouth was crammed to capacity and he was trying to swallow as fast as he thought consistent with good manners. "From an engineering point of view, the explanation is simple. Any structure can be made to lean in any direction by the simple expedient of sinking the foundation a little deeper on the side where the slant is desired. For example, if I want the tower to lean toward me, I make the foundation deeper on this side," he said triumphantly as he hammered in rapid succession with a piece of bread the appropriate spot in the casserole. "If I want it to lean toward you, I dig deeper on that side." And he repeated the lively illustration.

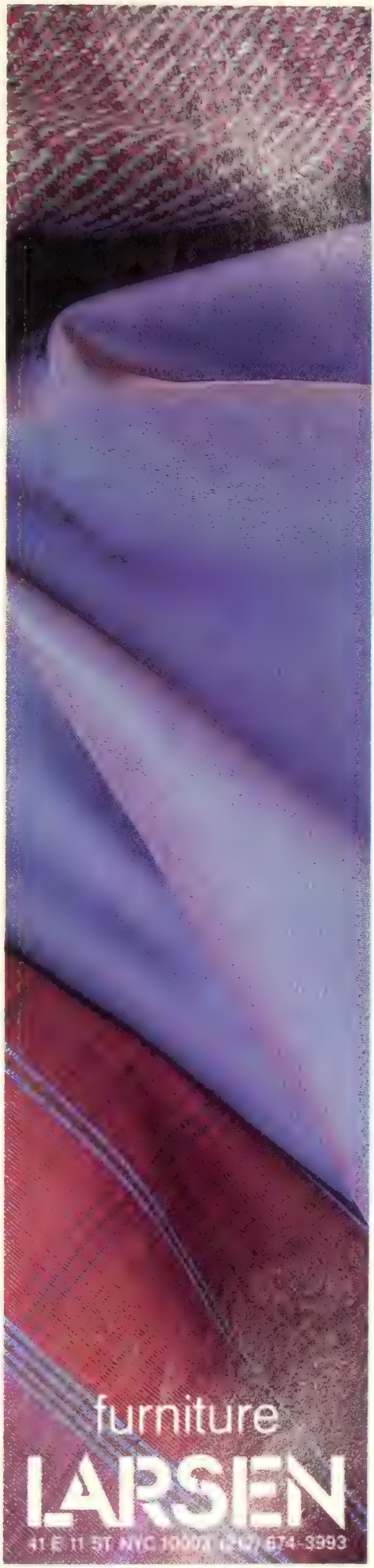
"Once the foundation has been dug, the rest is simple. The stones are then set in place, round and round and round, always following the estab-

"I make the foundation deeper," he said as he hammered with a piece of bread the appropriate spot in the casserole

lished contour, until the desired height is reached." By this time, several slices of bread had been consumed and there were only a few traces of sauce left in the casserole. With success within his grasp, he continued confidently. "When the desired altitude has been attained, all that remains is to superimpose a guard rail all around, and behold! the Leaning Tower of Pisa." The last circular swipe removed all traces of sauce from the casserole.

M. Charbonnier, with an understanding smile and the devil's twinkle in his eyes, looked at my father and said, "Marvelous!" He then raised his casserole to his lips, took the sauce in two experienced gulps, and burst into a belly laugh that was periodically renewed thereafter as frequently as the two men met. And that was the beginning of a friendship that, but for the intrusion of Italy's imperial ambitions, might have endured unto death. □

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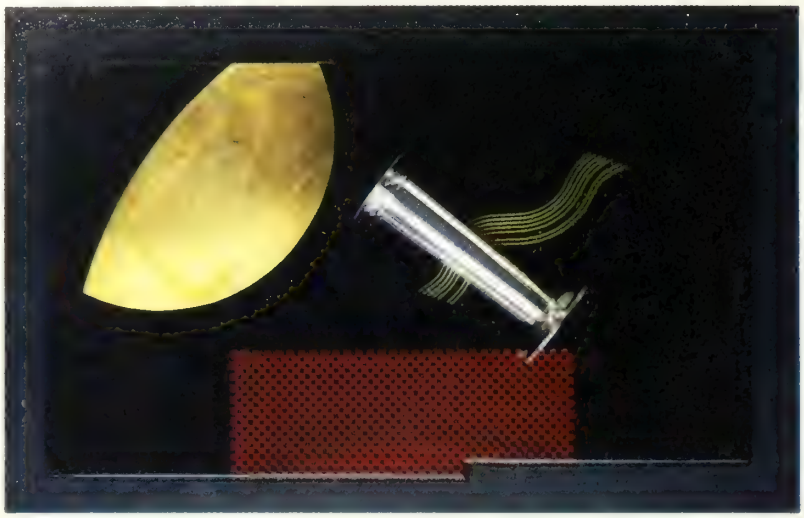
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THE ARCHITECTURAL TABLETOP

New china, glassware, and silver by international architects extend even further the current interest in total design

By Martin Filler



On Arata Isozaki's lacquer place mat, Robert Stern's Harmonie candlestick

We live in a society deluged with designer everything: jeans by socialites, chocolates by couturiers, and sheets by Romantic novelists. Somewhat lost in the shuffle have been the professionals who for centuries were responsible for a great deal more than building houses: architects once put their hand to everything from soup bowls to nutcrackers. Now that they have again returned to their traditional sideline of designing furniture—including Michael Graves for Sunar, Robert Venturi, Richard Meier, Charles Gwathmey, and Robert Siegel for Knoll, and Aldo Rossi for Longoni—architects are continuing to widen their range to a degree not seen since the years just before World War I in Vienna, when the high-style architect reigned supreme as arbiter of the designed environment and creator of consumer goods for the fully equipped bourgeois life.

Nostalgia for the days of the Wiener Werkstätte—the decorative-arts atelier founded by the architect Josef Hoffmann in 1903 to promote the artful crafts—now runs high among the international architectural community. Esteemed as highly by Hans Hollein in Vienna as Arata Isozaki in Tokyo, the Wiener Werkstätte is the major source of common inspiration among avant-garde architects at a time when historical influence in design is as heterogeneous as it is fashionable. Thus it is by no means a surprise that the spirit of the Wiener Werkstätte hangs heavily over the pieces being introduced to the public this month as part of a comprehensive effort to reengage architects in the creation of articles for entertaining and dining.

The debut offering of china, glassware, and silver designs being presented by Swid Powell—the New York firm founded two years ago with the express purpose of reestablishing the link between architecture and product design for the table—is an impressive demonstration of risk taken and won. This carefully edited selection of a much larger group of proposals submitted by a constellation of architectural superstars (including Venturi, Isozaki, and Meier), stars (Gwathmey and Siegel), meteors (Robert Stern and Stanley Tigerman), and even a nova (Laurinda Spear) can also be read as a summary of the major trends in contemporary architecture. It includes designs that are by turns Late Modern and Post-Modern, old guard and New Wave, witty and earnest, cartoonish and cautious. It has been said that pluralism is less an article of design faith than an unavoidable symptom of our lack of cultural direction, but from the evidence of this confident collection one would never know it.

Even at first glance there are pieces that seem destined to become classics: Richard Meier's superbly proportioned (though unfortunately named) King Richard bowl, a shallow silver basin rimmed with a chaste band of openwork squares; Robert Venturi's mottled black-and-white Notebook plates, cup, and saucer, the pattern a playful blow-up of the one we stared at endlessly in grade school; and Gwathmey Siegel's Rays buffet plate, exquisite in its delicate play of black hairline rules given a shift so subtle that it will no doubt also become the design most palatable to traditionalists.

Other offerings have a discreet stylishness that will no doubt appeal to young urbanites who are now ready to move on to designs more sophisticated than the Art Deco imitations that proliferated in china and glassware at the beginning of this decade. Among them are the two buffet plates by Arata Isozaki: Stream, with stylized ripples in

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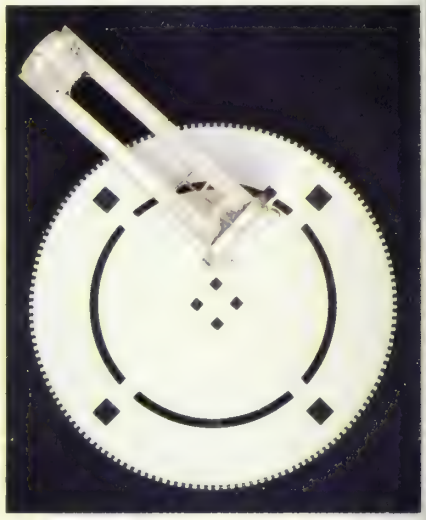
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dull gold against a dark matte gray rim and Eight Bridges, with a gold-on white zigzag deriving from a tradition al Japanese bridge motif that also makes a pun on dining, since *hashi,* the Japanese word for bridge, also means chopsticks.

Those who do not necessarily be lieve that dinnerware should provide a neutral background for food will find plenty to choose from as well. Robert Venturi, whose skill in handling complex pattern is more highly developed than any other member of his architectural generation, is represented with china in the same Grandmother design—a pastel floral print overlaid with black crosshatching—that he used for the plastic-laminate veneer on his molded plywood furniture for Knoll International, introduced earlier this year. Also available is matching crystal barware that is etched either with the flowers or the dashes. Clearly he means for us to mix and match.

Laurinda Spear's single buffet plate, called Miami Beach, is a sprightly and colorful abstract composition of geometric and biomorphic shapes. It is much in the mood of the work of her Florida-based architectural firm, Arquitectonica, typified by its affectionate toying with the bouyant forms beloved by the architects of the early International Style.

But the dominant figure among the Swid Powell architects is Richard Meier, who is represented by no fewer than three plate patterns, six crystal designs, and four pieces of silver. The explanation for this prolific outpouring



Gwathmey Siegel's Tuxedo buffet plate, Richard Meier's King Richard candlestick.

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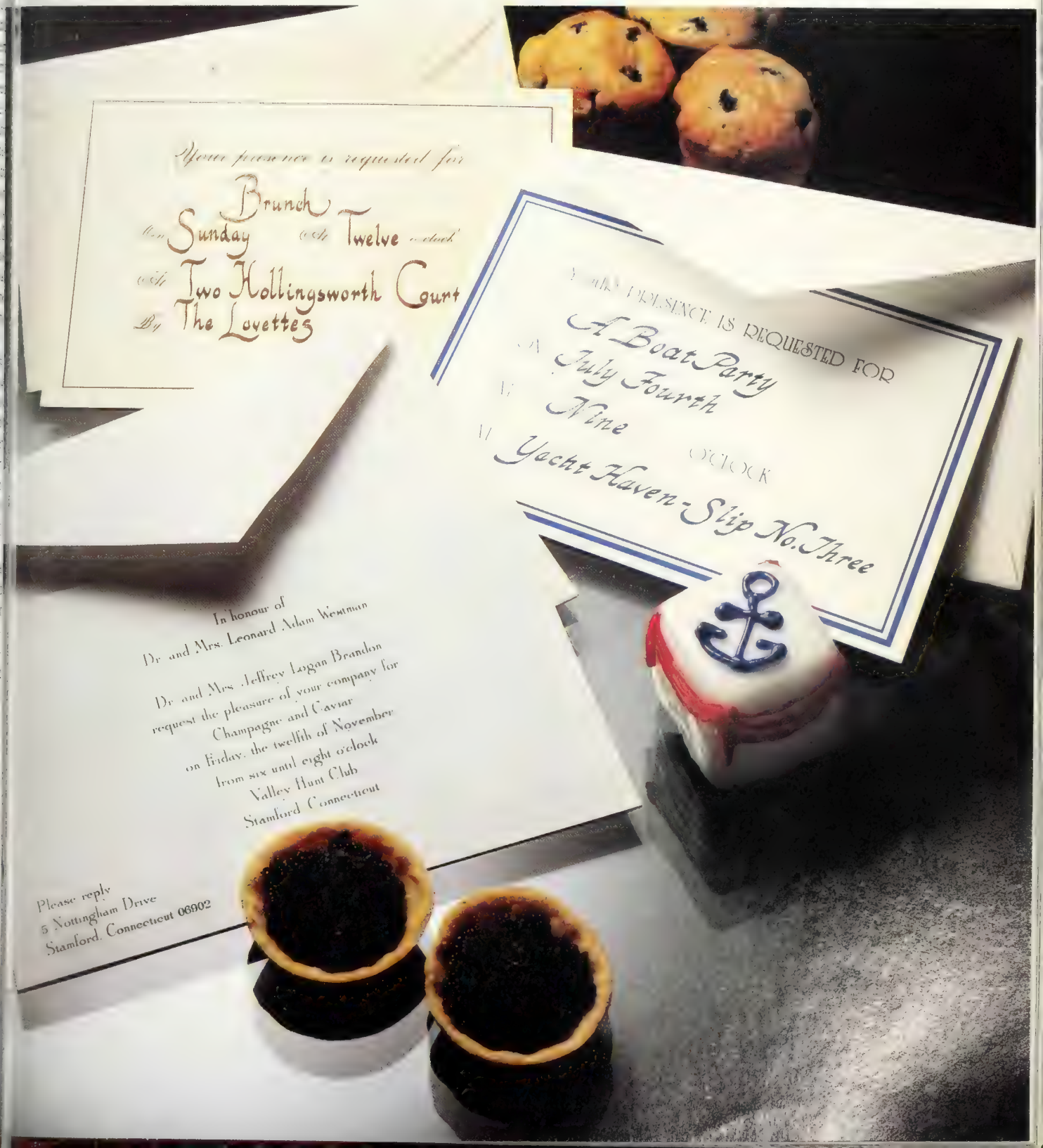
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Notebook buffet plate and Grandmother highball glass, both by Robert Venturi.

stems from Meier's inherent interest in the subject. He sets one of the most fastidiously arranged tables in New York in his own apartment (which contains a number of Wiener Werkstätte publications and artifacts); apparently, once he began to design china and glassware on his own, he just couldn't stop. There are geometrically patterned buffet plates named in honor of his two young children, Anna and Joseph, as well as another called Peachtree, after the Atlanta street on which stands his widely acclaimed High Museum of Art.

All in all, Meier makes a strong showing, especially in the glassware. But ironically, the closest match of china and silver in the Swid Powell collection is not between two works by Meier, as one might have expected, but rather between Meier's King Richard silver and Gwathmey Siegel's Tuxedo buffet plate. They both make remarkably similar use of the checker motif that was a hallmark of the Wiener Werkstätte (which in turn had picked it up from the Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh), but given the extent to which most of the architects in this new project have been mesmerized by that great moment in modern design history, it was perhaps inevitable that this kind of duplication would happen. If anything, though, it only serves to give the entire endeavor more of a unifying theme. (Yet another checkerboard pattern appears in a Swid Powell design that is still in the prototype stage: Arata Isozaki's set of four black, gold, and red lacquer place mats—the single most stunning scheme to emerge so far—incorporates the ancient Japanese *koshi-moyo* motif beneath gold arcs that represent th moon in a different phase on each mat.

There is no question that the Swi Powell venture can be deemed an aes thetic success. The Metropolitan Mu seum of Art has already asked fo pieces for its permanent collection, th Walker Art Center in Minneapoli plans to offer selections from the line i its gift shop, and it will be sold in majo department stores nationwide.

But will it also be a commercial hit That is the intention of the firm's tw principals, Nan Swid and Addie Pow ell, who are aiming as much for a busi ness coup as an artistic triumph. Thei target audience is the so-called Secon Marriage Market: not the first-tim homemaker looking for a full din nerware service, but rather the older more affluent customer seeking inven tively designed "fill-in" pieces to g with their existing china and glassware Thus they have included generously proportioned buffet plates, wine glasses and champagne flutes, and the ever-popular double old-fashioneds, the pieces that everyone always seems to need more of.

Swid and Powell have believed from the start that the public—or at least a sufficiently well-heeled segment of it—is now ready for this kind of luxury-level design excellence and will be willing to pay for it as they would for Baccarat, Wedgwood, or Waterford. Not surprisingly, their previous professional experience at Knoll International (where Powell was a vice-president for sales, and Swid, who is married to one of the company's co-chairmen, worked on design development) has been an encouraging example that exceptional design can be exceptionally profitable. Quality, they are convinced, will be its own—and their—reward. □



Arata Isozaki's Stream buffet plate, Richard Meier's Spiral claret glass, and Robert Stern's Metropolitan candlestick.

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Watercolor of a bedroom in the Hofburg, *left,* by J.S. Decker, 1826. Biedermeier chair, *below,* from Schloss Schönbrunn.

EMPIRE MADE EASY

Biedermeier captured the zeitgeist of post-Napoleonic Vienna

By Simon Jervis

In 1793 Queen Marie Antoinette of France, daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor Francis I and the Empress Maria Theresa, was guillotined, and the very concept of absolute monarchy appeared in mortal danger. In 1804 its embodiment, the Hapsburg Empire, much reduced in the eighteenth century by dynastic wars and Prussian victories, was confronted by Napoleon's coronation of himself as Emperor.

Revolutions, invasions, battles—for over twenty years Europe witnessed upheaval on a heroic scale. Artists as diverse as Wordsworth and Beethoven experienced and expressed hope and disillusion. A grand imperial style was promulgated throughout Napoleon's domains. In England Gothic presented a new and romantic alternative and, in the 1820s, the Rococo revival enjoyed its luxurious first flowering. But what of Vienna, the capital of an empire crucially involved in these epic events?

By the late eighteenth century Vienna had become a backwater as far as the visual arts were concerned. Its Hapsburg rulers tended to live in relatively modest style within the great Baroque palaces they had inherited. They had to concentrate on the business of holding their empire together, and the prosecution of endless wars limited their resources. Within an inflexibly centralized framework trade was encouraged, but the times were not propitious for conspicuous expenditure on the grand scale, nor for thoroughgoing stylistic innovation. Neoclassicism had arrived in Vienna late, around 1780, and tentatively. In a typically provincial manner the new vocabulary of ornament was often applied as a superficial dressing to old forms. By 1800, however, a new spirit was evident. Thanks to the travels of journeymen and the study of imported pieces, and, equally important, the availability of prints and pattern books illustrating modern designs, Viennese cabinetmakers had a more accurate knowledge of the new forms and how the new ornament should be applied to them. At the same time there was vigorous official support for education in design at the artisan level, and magazines published in Germany were spreading the idea that craftsmen had it in their own power to emulate the prodigious economic success of England by the introduction of new technology, new materials, and new designs.



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Preservation builds the na

signs based on a close imitation of the latest foreign models were unusual. The massive architectural character of much French Empire furniture aroused little enthusiasm in Viennese cabinetmakers, and its icy perfection of Neoclassical detail was beyond their powers. Having nonetheless adopted the French fashion for a combination of dark mahogany and gilt mounts, they adapted it to pieces of a light, elegant late-eighteenth-century character or to novel variations on Empire themes which often seem almost to parody their prototypes through a quirky use of ornament or form, or even through sheer simplicity. English designs were also an influence, but the most important lessons from England were the virtues of combining solidity and practicality, the versatility and mechanical ingenuity of English furniture, and, above all, English comfort and informality.

It has always been convenient for historians to use the Congress of Vienna of 1814 to 1815 as a boundary mark between Empire and Biedermeier. Ironically in Vienna itself this event has little stylistic significance. As has been stated, Empire, as such, was not a style practiced in Vienna, and it is more sensible to treat the years from 1800 to 1830 as a stylistic continuum. But if Biedermeier is used in its more general social sense, 1815 does make a valid starting point, marking the beginning of a period of peace and increasing prosperity when Herr Biedermeier, that Pooter-like caricature of the simple philistine bourgeois invented in 1853, could enjoy his harmless domestic pleasures in Vienna as elsewhere in Germany. (In Metternich's police state, of course, he had little choice.)

Fortunately documents on the education of cabinetmakers in Vienna have survived in the form of designs associated with a drawing school run by Carl Schmidt. Schmidt was born in Soldin, northeast of Berlin, in 1800, and worked as a cabinetmaker in both Prague and Vienna before studying architecture at the Vienna Academy in the late 1820s. He then ran his drawing school until at least 1847 and was later made an honorary citizen of Vienna. The designs luckily include several earlier than Schmidt's arrival at the school, some as early as 1806. The whole sequence reveals a remarkable formal consistency, typical of the conservative approach of the artisan to design. The ornament develops surprisingly little and is often deployed more with an eye to superficial charm than to learned propriety—another artisan characteristic.

The Museum of Applied Art in Vienna, where the Schmidt drawings are kept, contains an even more important archive in the form of over 2,500 designs from the Danhauser furniture manufactory. Josef Danhauser (1780–1829) was born in Vienna, the son of a sculptor, and himself studied sculpture at the Academy from 1795. Although he later styled himself "academic sculptor," it is clear that he never made the grade as a fine artist. Instead he became an entrepreneur, manufacturing gilt, silvered, and bronzed lights and ornaments from 1807. In 1814 he was given permission to produce "all manner of furniture," an opportunity he seized with both hands, to such effect that in 1825 he was able to take over the former Karoly Palace as showrooms, warehouse, and workshops. Danhauser's products



Biedermeier desk made in Vienna, circa 1825. From Jean-Paul Beaujard, New York.

ranged from the imitation gilt-bronze lights with which he had started to ottomans, sofas, armchairs, chairs, stools, beds, cradles, curtains, commodes, cupboards, tables, stands, and so on—every imaginable type of furniture. There are hundreds of designs for seating: there are even more than 35 designs for pipe stands and more than thirty for spittoons. Sadly Danhauser died early in 1829 and thereafter his business went downhill until its final extinction in 1842.

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The Continuing Adventure: Chapter 1

Once upon a night in Kaohsiung . . .



The chairs on the page opposite have just arrived from Kaohsiung ("kow-shung") in Taiwan, which reminds us of a story.

A customer of ours was dining alone one night in the King Wang Hotel. But she was not alone for long. A man in a rumpled white suit spoke to her as she began dessert, noticing her puzzlement over some fruits she could not identify.

He was a French art dealer who had not seen France for a decade. Once, he said, on a trip in search of native art, he had lived on canned kumquats for a month. They talked for hours about life and love and survival.

Today they are married and live in Chicago.

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For example, our black rattan chairs made near Kaohsiung have a sophistication you would scarcely



A rattan bender at work.

expect in a piece made of jungle vine. And the Swedish-designed sofa on the left sensibly conceals a bed.

Not that we have become *too* sensible. We still buy oddities on impulse that have nothing to recommend them but their charm. Like the almost-antique live coal iron sitting on the floor by the sofa. We were able to pick up



hundreds of these in Turkish villages that have just acquired electricity.

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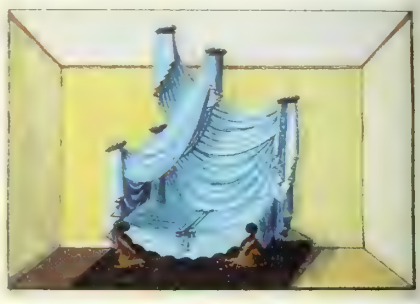
HOMEWARES
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Danhauser furniture designs can use simple typically Biedermeier forms—practical, sturdy, and often blockish. But they are often less straightforward, making play of geometrical solids, spheres, cones, cubes, and cylinders, in the most unexpected combinations, or exploiting the furthest limits of skeletal lightness in construction. The original upholstery of surviving furniture of this date has usually perished. The Danhauser designs demonstrate that this upholstery was often not only dominant but also fantastic. Sofas could consist entirely of upholstered elements, no wood being visible. Beds often had the most extraordinary flying canopies, while draperies explored every possible combination and contrast of pole, pelmet, and curtain. Even with wooden furniture a wide range of color was available, from the black of ebony or ebonized wood or the rich dark brown of mahogany to the light bright tones of maple, ash, or cherry. With upholstery the choice was much greater. Lightish blues and greens were perhaps the most common colors but bright pinks, yellows, lilacs, and orange were also used, as well as darker colors.

In the painting of rooms there was also a predilection for clear light colors: greens, blues, grays, and pinks. Painting schemes were usually simple. However, the survival of a series of designs by Franz Weiner demonstrates that this was not always so. His schemes included elaborate colonnades and landscapes, fictive draperies and greenery. Yet complicated as Weiner's schemes could be, they never have a grand academic character. There is always an element of improvisation, even oddity.

The Biedermeier cult of domesticity resulted in Vienna as elsewhere in the creation of detailed watercolor records of interiors. Even when these depict the residences of the imperial family informality is a dominant characteristic. It has two principal and related symptoms. Firstly each room contains a great variety of furniture types and forms: there seems almost to have been a conscious avoidance of the repetitive suites and pairs typical of the eighteenth century. This variety reflects the second hallmark of the Biedermeier interior, its subdivision into distinct activity zones. Over and over again Biedermeier rooms contain in one corner a desk, wastepaper basket, and chair, in another a bed, wardrobe, and bedside table, in another a piano and a chair, and so on. Even paintings or prints tend to be gathered into little groups and ornaments cluttered together on *étagères* or in vitrines. A grand unity seems to be wholly abjured.

This account commenced, to set the scene and point the contrast, with historic events on the grand scale. In 1830 that heroic ideal, the history painter, was gently and significantly mocked by the painter Josef Danhauser (1805–1845), son of the great furniture manufacturer. In a sketch he depicted the painter asleep in his studio. Before his easel lie neglected the symbols of lofty aspiration, the classic cast of sculpture, the romantic coat of armor; outside a bright and sunny landscape beckons. As with Viennese Biedermeier itself the charm of such a representation, witty though it pretends to be, embraces a generous measure of provinciality and naïveté.



Design for a bed attributed to the Danhauser factory.

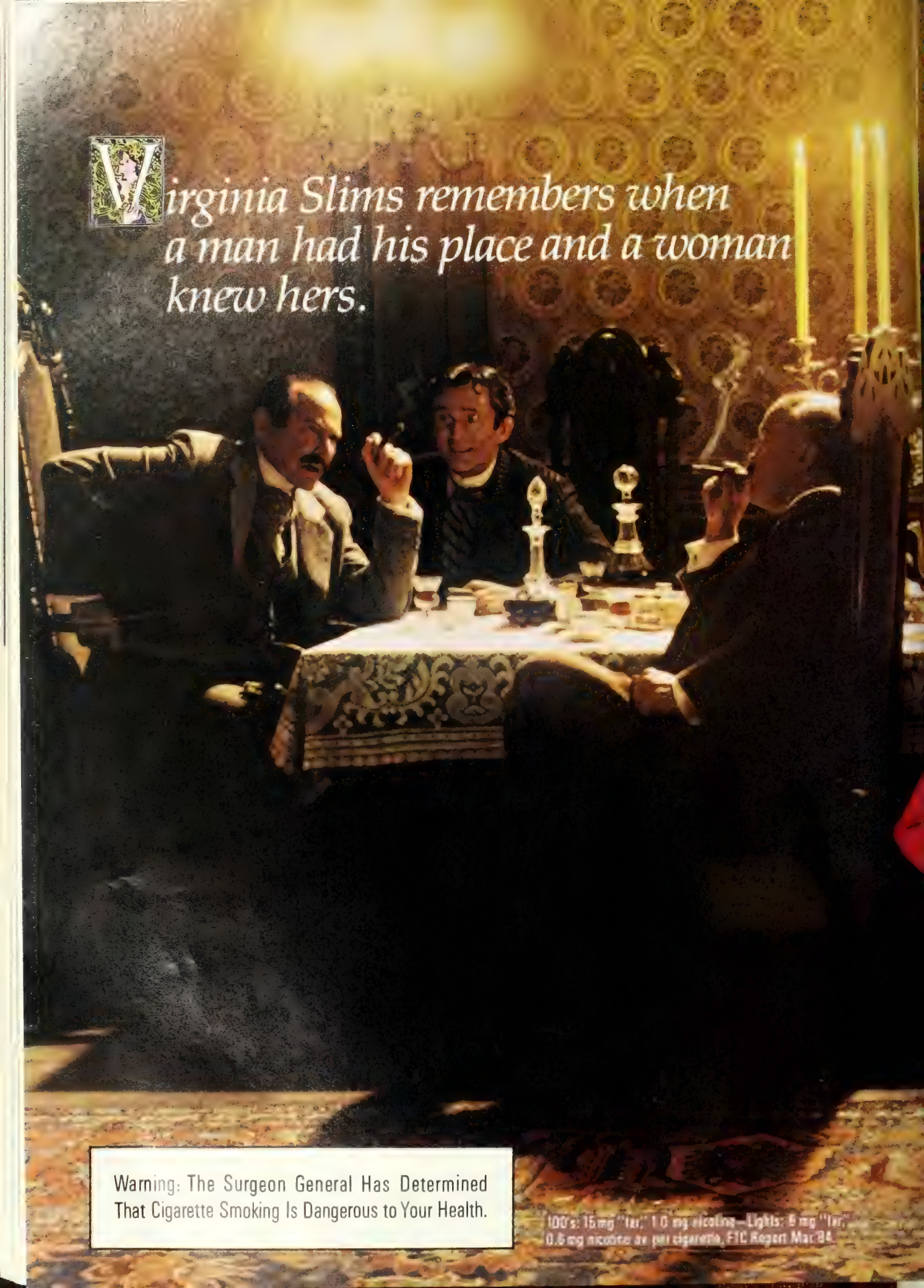
A more complex and sophisticated system of design prevailed after the failed revolution of 1848. But after an exhibition in 1896 commemorating the Congress of Vienna there was a revival of Biedermeier. Its lightness, simplicity, and directness appealed to advanced designers and commercial manufacturers alike. The present renewal of interest in Biedermeier has prized the same qualities. Perhaps a celebration of the more imaginative aspects of Viennese furniture and decoration of this period is overdue. Post-Modern designers could learn much from the unselfconscious liveliness of designs by Josef Danhauser and his contemporaries. □

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ALL ABOUT STYLE

By Nancy Richardson



Mme. de Maintenon

■ CHÂTEAU DE MAINTENON The disappointment in visiting many historic French houses is that so much of the furniture and most of the pictures have been sold. The Château de Montgeoffroy, the Château d'Anet, and Vaux le Vicomte with its newly redone eighteenth-century bedrooms are rich exceptions. Less well-known is Maintenon, which sits a little south and west of Versailles and is owned in this generation by Mme. de Maintenon's descendants Genevieve de Noailles and her husband Jean Raindre. Recently the Raindres have mounted an exhibition of prints, paintings, furniture, and objects to celebrate the three-hundredth anniversary of Mme. de Maintenon's morganatic marriage to Louis XIV. What not to miss: at the end of the park, a Hubert Robert–like ruin of three kilometers–worth of Roman-style aqueduct, which Louis XIV started to build in the 1680s in order to bring water to the gardens of Versailles. Inside: Mme. de Maintenon's own small apartment, with its sunny prayer room, tiny bedroom—warmer than a larger one—and leather-lined anteroom in which the Swiss guards sat and smoked, still gives off an atmosphere of elegance, intellect, piety, and common sense. Françoise Chandernagor's recent fictionalized account of Mme. de Maintenon's world, *The King's Way* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich), brings to life, just as Nancy Mitford did in her biographies of Louis XIV and Mme. de Pompadour, the atmosphere of court life—the fatigue of the routine, the isolation at the top, the barbaric treatments by court doctors, the fear of exile from Versailles, the lust for power and for romance, and Mme. de Maintenon's own special hold on the king. Maintenon was her refuge. The exhibition ends November 4. Open daily 2–6:30; Sundays 10:30–12. Have lunch at the Préjugé in Montfort. ■ ENGLISH GOODS At the center of the Grosvenor House Fair in London was a garden done by fashionable Clifton Nurseries, which is the latest venture of financier-collector Jacob Rothschild. Just off this oasis stood a bold piece of furniture of the sort that visitors come thousands of miles to see. Like other world-class furniture it looked like some prize animal, a great sire who when asked to stand extends his body and his legs until the feet are planted far out in front and back of the body's center. The bronze mounts added dignity and suitable elaboration—like a caparison worn only for a coronation. This particular beast is a serpentine commode, by an unknown maker, circa 1750, that wipes all the dreariness off the phrase "brown wood." At Stair in London. ■ PRINT SCREEN Ever since the eighteenth century women

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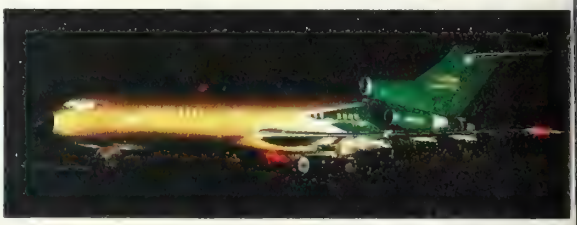
For complete catalog and nearest Artistic Brass showroom, [illegible]



Chair exhibition

have enjoyed cutting out prints and pasting them on a wall or a screen. The Mary Ellen Best watercolor, *page 120,* shows a print screen in the 1840s. A modern one is by Nicola Wingate-Saul, who glues engravings and borders from the English National Trust onto gold-leafed wooden panels. To order: 61 Ebury Mews, London. Tel: (01) 730-3275. ■ CHAIRS IN NEW YORK Art dealers have always put on exhibitions, and now furniture dealers are following suit. One of the first New York dealers to get the idea was Tony Victoria, who several years ago organized a show around the decorations from the ballroom of the Villa Trianon, Elsie de Wolfe's house at Versailles. Now he is taking a look at an amazing range of French chairs to make the point that form followed function in the eighteenth century as surely as it did in the twentieth. Thus we are shown a desk chair with a straight back and an extra leg in front to keep a balance as the owner tucked his legs under him. An unusual Georges Jacob settee is made from four lyre-backed side chairs joined together. Seen from above it looks like what Louis XVI would have ordered if he wanted seating for a small royal screening room. An eighteenth-century shaving chair looks wonderful in profile, with the top half of the back tilted backwards like any modern barber's chair. Some of the chairs look like spiders standing on tiptoe. The best union of French frivolity and fine design: a *chaise d'amour*—a shortened, narrow-fronted chaise longue with a padded headrest on top of the chair back. One of Tony's own contributions to the exhibition, which is made up of examples from private collections and museums, is a multilegged centipede of a corner sofa with an asymmetrical back. Also on view, miniature furniture that Tony and his father Frederick P. Victoria collected—chairs for children and cabinetmakers' models. 154 East 55th Street, NYC, October 15–November 9. For more child-sized chairs go downtown to Kentshire Galleries, 37 East 12th Street, where from October 10–November 2 there will be an exhibition of English, German, and American examples from a private collection. Two tiny Belter chairs and rare Biedermeier and Eastlake models are worth a trip in themselves. Most of these chairs are for sale. ■ JOIE DE VIVRE What has a gold body, a money-green tail and flies? Malcolm Forbes's latest toy. The new plane, a Boeing 727 from the Braniff fleet, is already serving as a party palace in the same spirit as the *Highlander,* the Forbes yacht that steams up and down the Hudson in the summer with heads of corporations and heads of state on board. The plane lives at Newark Airport and makes junkets to the ranch in Colorado, a hideaway in Fiji, houses in Morocco, France, and England. The most renowned yacht designer in the world, Jon Bannenberg, supervised the renovation. The Forbeses did not want a "good taste" airplane, some sleek corporate bullet lined with mirror, gray leather, and natural wood paneling, but—tongue-in-cheek—explored the boundaries of that other end of the spectrum of taste with a double-bedded, foil-walled stateroom and a huge central cabin with enormous padded armchairs arranged in semicircular "conversation pits." ■ COLEFAX JUBILEE For fifteen years Americans have felt the influence of the taste of John Fowler and Nancy Lancaster through the Colefax and Fowler fabrics sold in this

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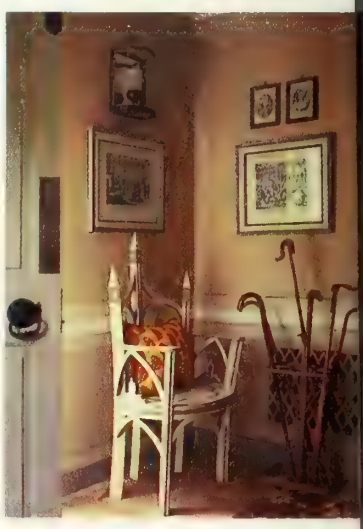


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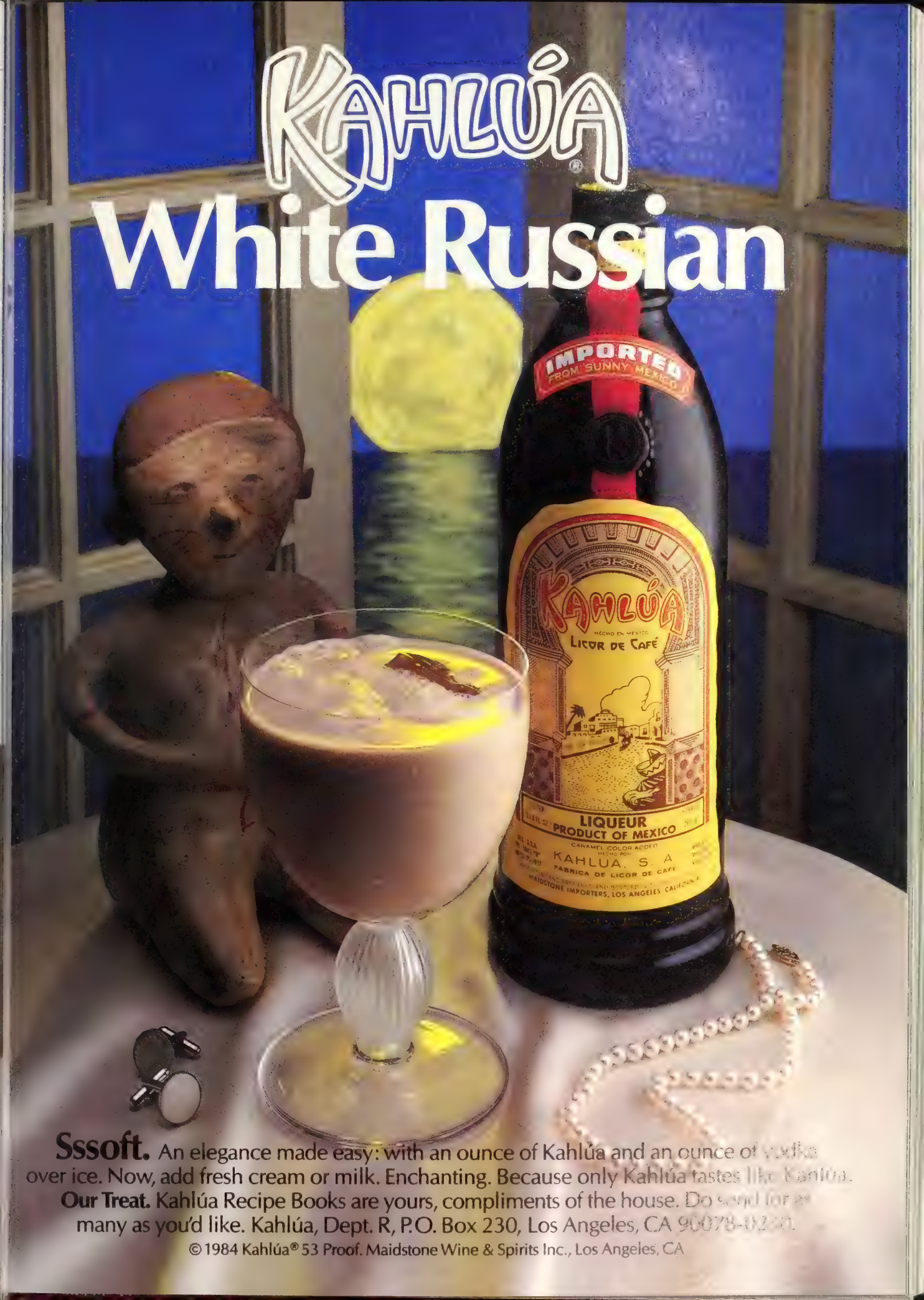
Colefax's Hydrangea fabric; Mrs. Lancaster.







John Fowler's front hall at Odiham.



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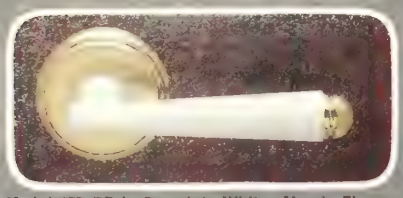
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country at Clarence House. The chintze implied that glazed cotton suited contem porary rooms—even in the city—bette than damasks and taffetas. Tiny-patterned simply-colored cotton materials copie from carriage linings and trimmings o eighteenth-century dresses after the wa long ago set the standard for children' bedrooms and guest rooms. The haute cou ture treatment of these simple materials in beautiful festoon curtains, bed hangings ruffled cushions, and slipcover skirting was a Fowler hallmark and has been widely and mostly unsuccessfully copied. John Fowler died in 1973, and Mrs. Lancaster is

What has a gold body, a money-green tail and flies? Malcolm Forbes's latest toy, a 727 from the Braniff fleet

no longer active in the business. Her eldest son Michael Tree and the management of Colefax in London have planned a fiftieth-birthday celebration for the firm, September 25–October 10, 39 Brook Street, London. Examples of curtains, trimming, upholstery, objects, photographs of rooms, and other documents all from the heyday of the Fowler-Lancaster partnership will be on display in Mrs. Lancaster's famous yellow drawing room. ■ BROOKLYN SYMPOSIUM In celebration of the redoing of the latest group of period rooms at The Brooklyn Museum, there will be a weekend symposium, October 19–20, on the controversial topic of how museum curators ought to approach the process that Brooklyn curator Dianne Pilgrim has just completed. There will be speakers from Colonial Williamsburg, Winterthur, Yale, and others. Issues such as the doing up of a museum room as it might have been rather than as it was, the use of reproductions, costumed mannequins, and painted views placed outside false windows to simulate the outdoors, the virtue of showing only the most high-style rooms as opposed to the most typical. To me the biggest question of all: If a room or house didn't have any particular charm when it was first done, why bother people with it today? Preregistration required. Call The Brooklyn Museum: (212) 638-5000, ext. 232. □

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HIGH STYLE IN JAMAICA

Angelo Donghia uses thirties bamboo and cool, white linen and duck for the Ralph Laurens' Montego Bay house

BY STEVEN M.L. ARONSON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDGAR DE EVIA



Ricky and Ralph Lauren, *this page. Left:* Off the living room, a corner of the veranda, with a table designed by Angelo Donghia, bamboo chairs covered in white duck, and white canvas curtains.

LES GOLDBERG





In the living room, Donghia designed the wall brackets holding candles, lamps on antique Italian table behind sofa, and white-duck-covered banquettes. He put in crown moldings here and in all rooms, mahogany around doors, and stripped mahogany shutters. The 1930 bamboo chairs are covered in white duck, mirror over fireplace is 18th-century French.



Jamaica: the sun-shot island where so many of the world's celebrated have left impressions in the sand. "I found your footsteps in Noel Coward's bungalow," Evelyn Waugh, visiting Ian Fleming, wrote to Graham Greene.

Waugh, breakfasting on a Jamaican veranda as tiny hummingbirds hovered round flowering trees, resigned himself to the inescapable peace of the place; he described his retreat as "a fine airy house on a hill overlooking the sea. . . It is rather like Pixton if you can imagine the sea starting at the gates & running to the horizon brilliant blue."

A landscape whose colors are preternatural; the charm and romance of another age, for even today Jamaica, with its Pimm's cups, cricket fields, and hill stations looks back over its shoulder to a vanished England—these are the qualities that pervade the Burrall Hoffman–designed house in Montego Bay that Angelo Donghia has restored for the Ralph Laurens.

A high, breathless hill gives the house its pride of place. It looks coolly out over a steaming tangle of bamboo and broad-leaved banana trees, past the golden scimitar of beach, to a vast stretch of the Caribbean. The property extends as far as one can ride on a horse in a day.

The house is approached by a long driveway; the banks surrounding it are ablaze with the bougainvillaea cultivated by the previous owner, investment banker Clarence Dillon. The look and character of the house are British-Colonial; it was built in the fifties, in the last, undreaming days of Empire.

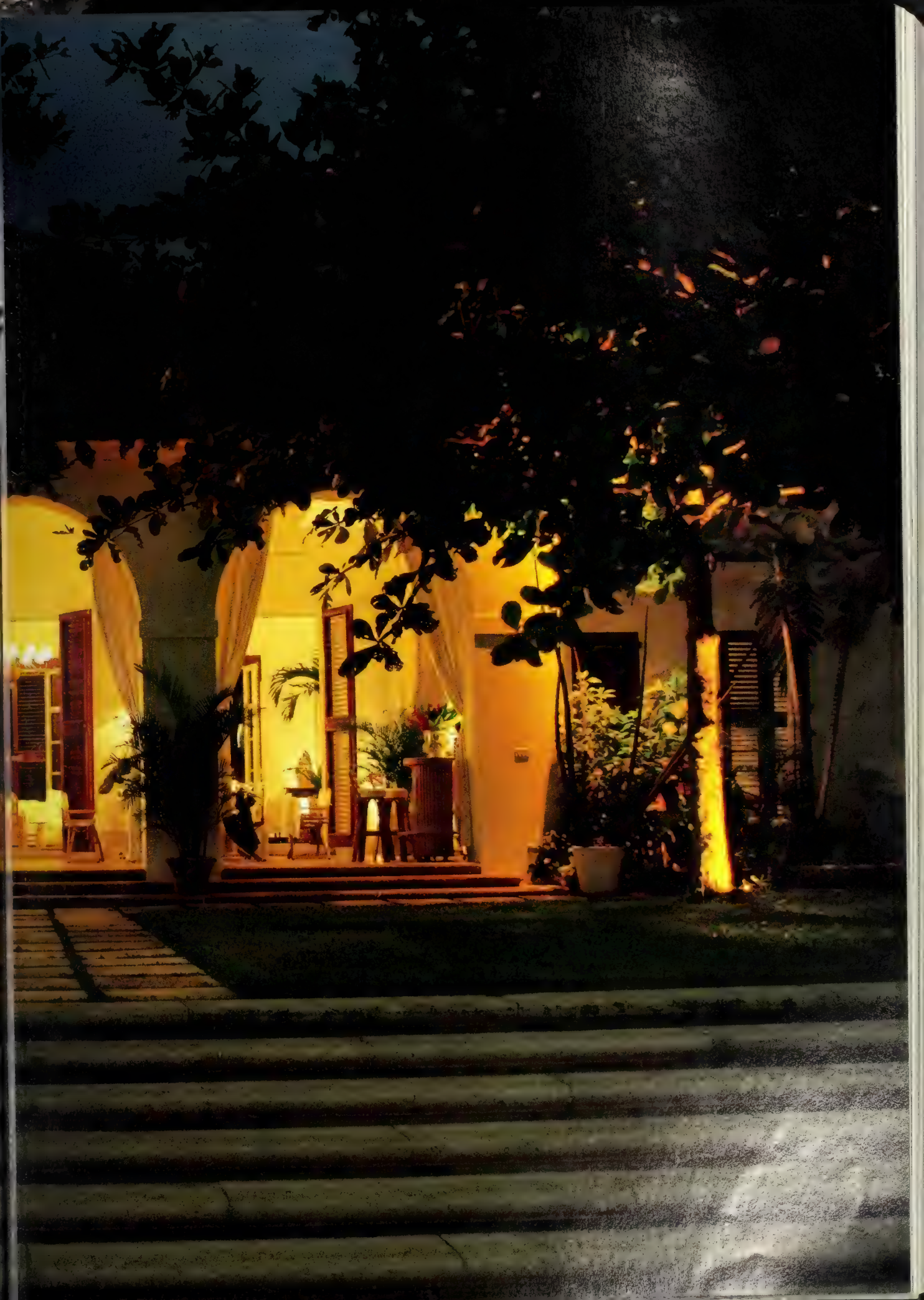
"I didn't want to destroy the mood of the house," Angelo Donghia says. "I didn't want to invade the place. I had a great respect for the natural architecture—even the new bathrooms we put in we made the way they would have been." But Angelo *(Text continued on page 230)*

Beyond the swimming pool, thirties chairs and table, *above,* found in Jamaica sit next to a hammock from New York strung between two sea-almond trees. *Opposite:* Tropical vegetation in the garden.

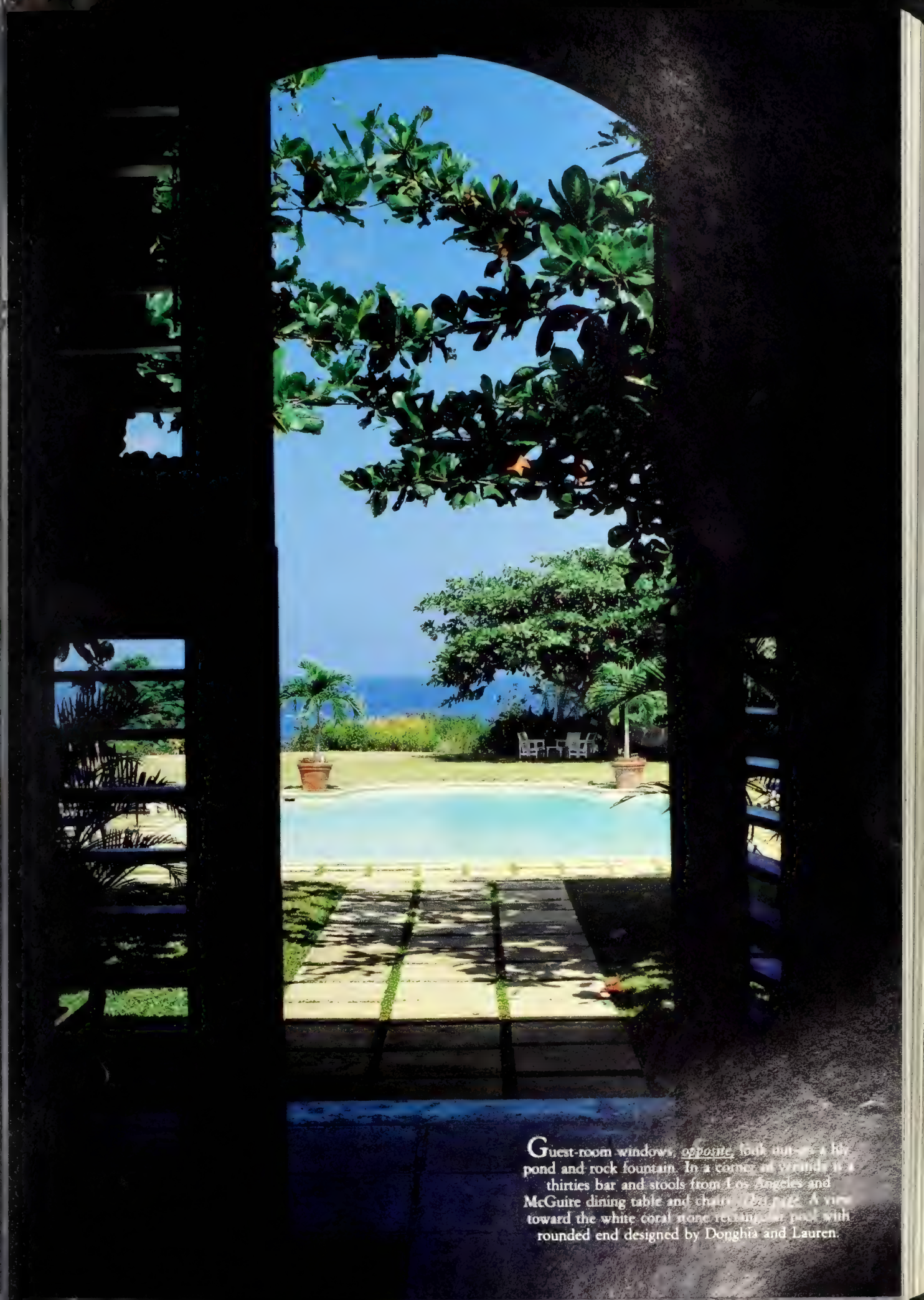




Looking up from the pool at night into the living room of the house, which is framed by the veranda arches.







Guest-room windows, opposite, look out on a koi pond and rock fountain. In a corner of veranda, a thirties bar and stools from Los Angeles and McGuire dining table and chairs. (See page.) A view toward the white coral stone rectangular pool with rounded end designed by Donghia and Lauren.



In the master bedroom the theme of white and bamboo continues, and a gauzy fabric over the bed nostalgically evokes mosquito netting. The bed linens are from Ralph Lauren's home furnishings collection. The antique rattan dressing table and stool were bought in Los Angeles; the woven hemp carpet is from Stark.

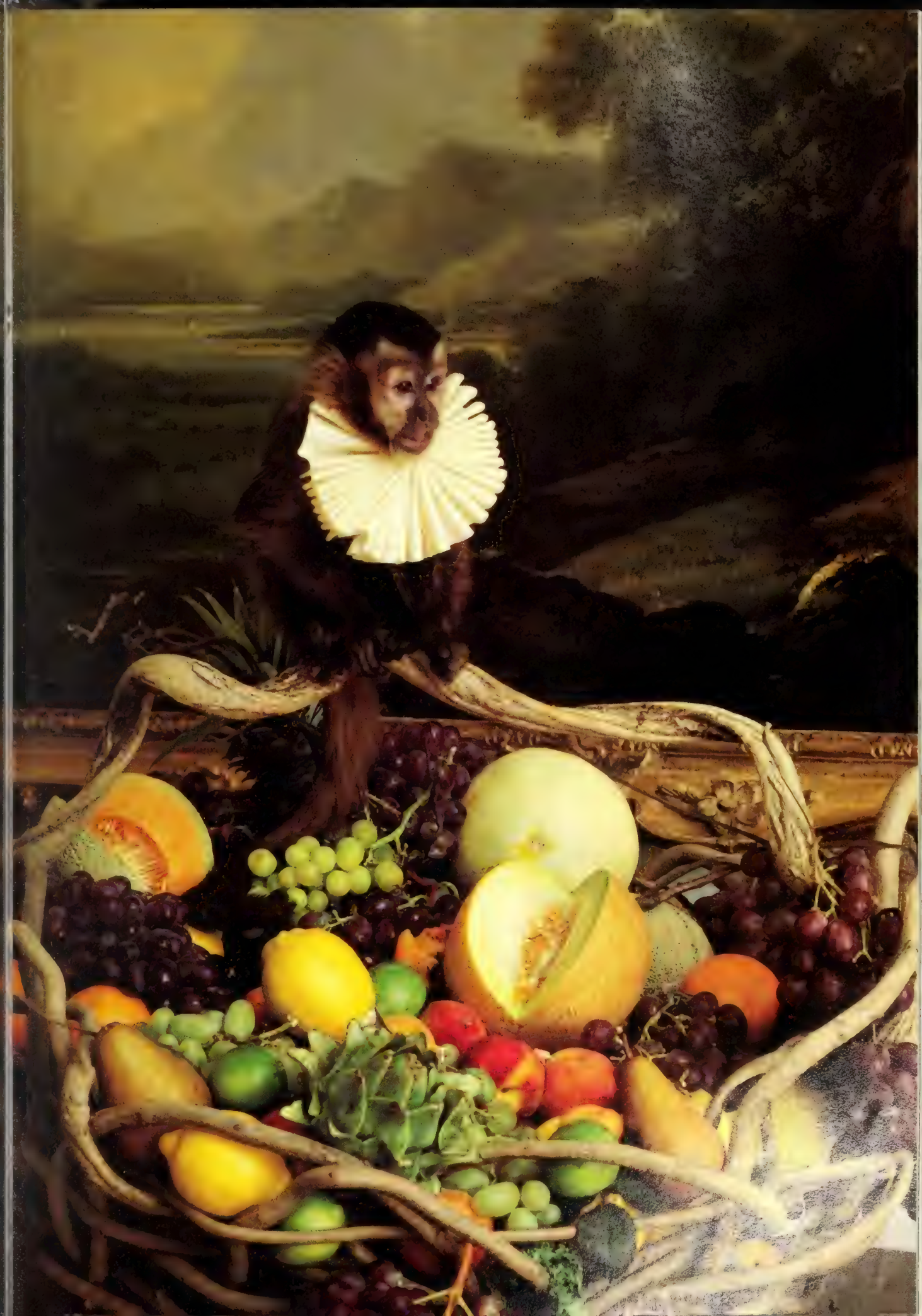


LORDLY MANNER

The Earl of Mount Charles keeps one foot on this side of the ocean in a New York flat decorated by Arnold Copper

BY ELAINE GREENE PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI

In a 17th-century Flemish mode, *opposite,* a live monkey is made part of a still life by José Vilela, who also did the flowers here. Irish landscape by Robertson. *Above:* George IV's gift, chairs of Adam style and period in original petit point.





On the sunny, street side of the broad Manhattan house, the second-floor ballroom is Lord Mount Charles's sumptuous drawing room. Various gilt-bronze figures represent King George IV, the great family benefactor. Derby urns on mantel and skirted table from James Robinson. Turquoise opaline and crystal chandelier from Neal. Laura Ashley striped curtain and table fabric.





In the early 1800s the Irish Lady Conyngham of Mount Charles became the favorite mistress of King George IV. This alliance moved her husband up one notch in the peerage, produced a trove of excellent furniture and works of art, and provided the family with a hobby that has not palled: collecting George IV memorabilia. Part of that trove and some of the memorabilia have now come to America, where the young Earl of Mount Charles—a sometime antiquarian and Sotheby's executive, a sometime rock-music promoter, and an aspiring politician—resides when he is not at his castle in Slane, County Meath, Ireland.

Wishing to establish a pied-à-terre in New York City, Lord Mount Charles commissioned a friend, interior designer Arnold Copper, to find him a proper place. The designer discovered a full floor in a 1901 house that was being brutally remodeled. Copper was unable to prevent the stripping of beautiful paneling from some of the walls, but he captured the house-wide ballroom almost intact with its gilded gesso ceiling and splendid carved chimney piece. In this major room, the men placed furniture given Lady Conyngham by the King, as well as other Slane pieces, gilded sculptures of the monarch, and numerous paintings of her ladyship's era and friend; Copper added several New York tables appropriate to the house. In the rooms stripped of their riches, the designer compensated with fine furnishings, color, and pattern. And New York may soon see more of Mount Charles than Slane does. □ *Editor: Babs Simpson*



The library, *top,* a room denuded of detail, was made luxurious by deep color and handsome objects like the American Empire mirror and clock over the mantel, the Chinese-style pottery by John Copper from Paul M. Jones. *Above:* Henry, Earl of Mount Charles. *Opposite, above and below:* Also rich in color is the bedroom. Copper found the bed in pieces ("slivers") in the Slane Castle attic. Small round portraits on porcelain are of George IV and his brother, the Duke of York. All hangings, Laura Ashley; all upholstery, Lee Jofa.







GARDEN MADNESS

Around her Virginia studio-home decorated by William Hodgins, Tori Winkler Thomas literally paints a landscape

BY ALICE GORDON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACQUES DIRAND



Drenching amounts of latex house paint cover blighted boxwoods in shades of "neglected" blue and lilac to correspond in feeling, says Tori Thomas, to the old house, seen *above* from a hill across the stream and *left* from the front porch. Iron dogs are 18th-century English. *Opposite:* A line of painted leaves points to the hill that rises beyond the house, set on sixty acres of Virginia property.



For the interiors, Boston-based designer Bill Hodgins made subtle variations on the painted-boxwood colors but mostly kept to the "super-neutral" scheme Thomas requires to escape from the color in her imagination. Extra windows and glass doors were added to the house, now full of light. Above the 18th-century French stone mantel, a painting by Todd Minor.



Most of the people who saw Tori Winkler Thomas's strange garden outside Millwood, Virginia, last fall did not wonder, "What kind of crazy nut would paint her bushes pink and blue?" but rather, "What kind of crazy bushes grow pink and blue leaves?" This majority suspension of disbelief still puzzles Thomas. "Blue bushes!" she exclaims softly, then goes on to discuss her current landscape-design projects, which include a cutting garden made of glass flowers and a hillside of computer-programed wild flowers. Thomas's practical and artistic goal as a landscape architect is to stretch the function and definition of plant materials as well as the workings of people's imaginations. Interestingly, she thinks she has a long way to go.

Tori Thomas has lived with some notable contradictions. Educated to be a city planner, she worked for three years as an art director and set designer for movies. Deciding that profession was too frustrating because "you do these things and they get ripped down the next day," she entered Harvard, at age 30, as a student of landscape architecture who was drawn to nature's ephemerality. Thomas reads

Above the English mantel in the dining room is one of the Beaux-Arts architectural drawings Thomas collects. This one is of a stable, relating to the Virginia horse country where her house is situated. At a country-French kitchen table spread with some of the tools of Thomas's trade, chairs painted by John Anderson of Boston.



"a great, great deal" and collects inkwells and children's books. She gets nervous when she has to talk about her work; she also seems to know very well what she wants to say.

"When I bought this property the boxwood was a very strong geometric form, but it wasn't on axis with anything. Several bushes of it were dead, and I thought, 'Well, I'll replace these two.' But there was a boxwood blight—hundred-year-old boxwoods all over Virginia were dying, it was really a terrible tragedy—and it wouldn't have done any good for me to just replace a few. Still, they were such a strong feature, I thought, 'What can I do other than tear them out?' So, in a blaze of glory, I painted them."

Thomas chose paint in "worn out" colors ("tattered lilac," "old basket blue") because the house is early-nineteenth century and therefore, she thought, called for an oldish-looking garden. The latex-embalmed bushes were to become the clear focus of a larger design tying the immediate landscape to the house as well as to the topography of the rest of the property—stream, woods, fields. The trails of







Wood-and-chicken-wire arch is filled with painted leaves, *opposite*. In summer, it was moved farther away from the house and planted with morning-glories. *Below:* Robert Jackson painted the trompe-l'oeil tile fireplace and cabinet in the master bedroom. Bed is English Regency, left purposely uncanopied by Bill Hodgins. Two of four Louis XVI chairs wear turn-of-the-century chintz.



leaves you see on these pages started out in traditional patterns within the confines of the experimental courtyard (which Thomas had built off the kitchen and living room when she and her friend interior designer Bill Hodgins renovated the house). "I was working with the idea of reinterpreting classical garden language," Thomas says, "by painting and ordering the leaves rather than sweeping them away, making a leaf parterre to relate to the axial geometry of the boxwood. But the parterre was too staid—the leaves broke out into the landscape and began getting more minimal. In the sixteenth century, Jacques Boyceau tried to translate the silken brocade patterns of fashionable dress into his parterres. I realized I was trying to do the same thing with modern art. It was exciting."

Though Tori Thomas bought this Virginia horse country property as a sixty-acre landscape laboratory, making the tumble-down house livable was the first order of business. The main task Thomas and Hodgins put themselves to was punching out a lot more windows. ("Tori never does anything part way," Bill Hodgins reports.) They also ripped up scads of *(Text continued on page 254)*

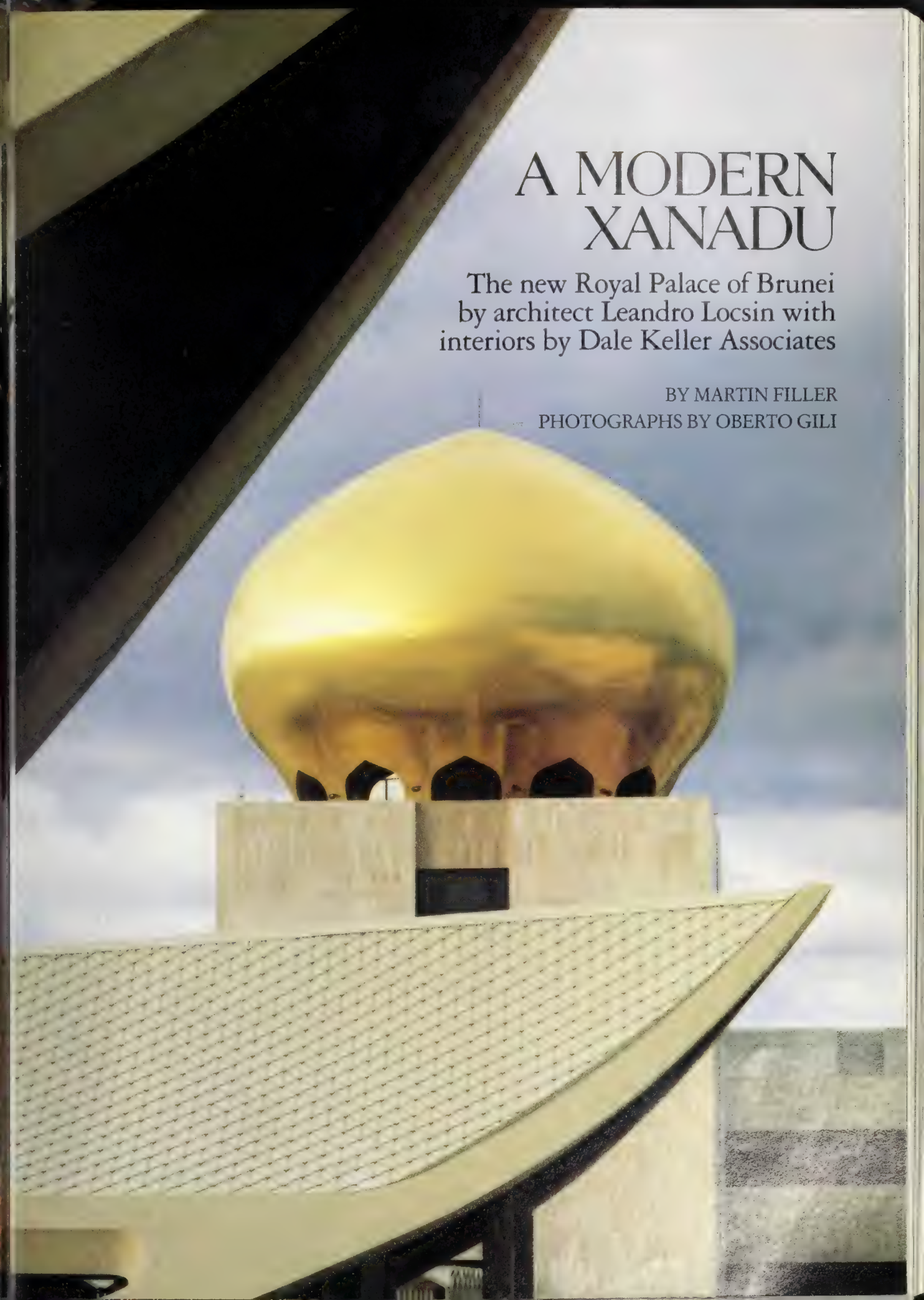


Tori Winkler's major professional goal, to create commercial courtyards and museum sculpture gardens, is refined in this experimental outdoor room just off the kitchen and living room. Two panels can be slid all the way open or closed entirely. Leaf trails tie the adjoining landscape to the house, focusing the boxwoods—originally on no logical axis—in the big picture.



THE REGAL EYE

From their canopied dais in the Throne Hall, the sultan and his queen can survey 2,000 of their subjects. *Opposite:* Beyond upswept roofs recalling traditional Malay architecture, an Islamic dome clad in 22-karat gold.



A MODERN XANADU

The new Royal Palace of Brunei by architect Leandro Locsin with interiors by Dale Keller Associates

BY MARTIN FILLER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

Before last January, those of us who knew about Brunei were by and large philatelists: we remembered it as the British protectorate whose stamps always seemed to be missing from our Coronation sets. But that was about it. Brunei was famous for nothing, nothing had ever happened there, and no one had ever been there.

But the shifting tides of geopolitical fate eventually decreed a new destiny for this obscure enclave on the northern coast of Borneo, and not surprisingly that dramatic emergence had to do with oil. As the continuing impetus to expand the world's petroleum supply prompted exploration for new sources in a number of out-of-the-way places, interest turned to Brunei, where rich seams of coal had been mined for decades. Informed geological hunches proved to be correct, and in 1963 vast deposits of offshore oil and natural gas were discovered there by Brunei Shell, thrusting the tiny country into new and unexpected prominence a decade later during the Mideast oil crisis. Soon Brunei attained one of the highest per-capita incomes in the world—along with other minuscule oiligarchies like Qatar and Kuwait—and tales of its fabulously rich young ruler, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, began to circulate in the West. But it was not until Brunei received its independence from Britain on January 1, 1984, that the scale of the sultan's wealth became apparent.

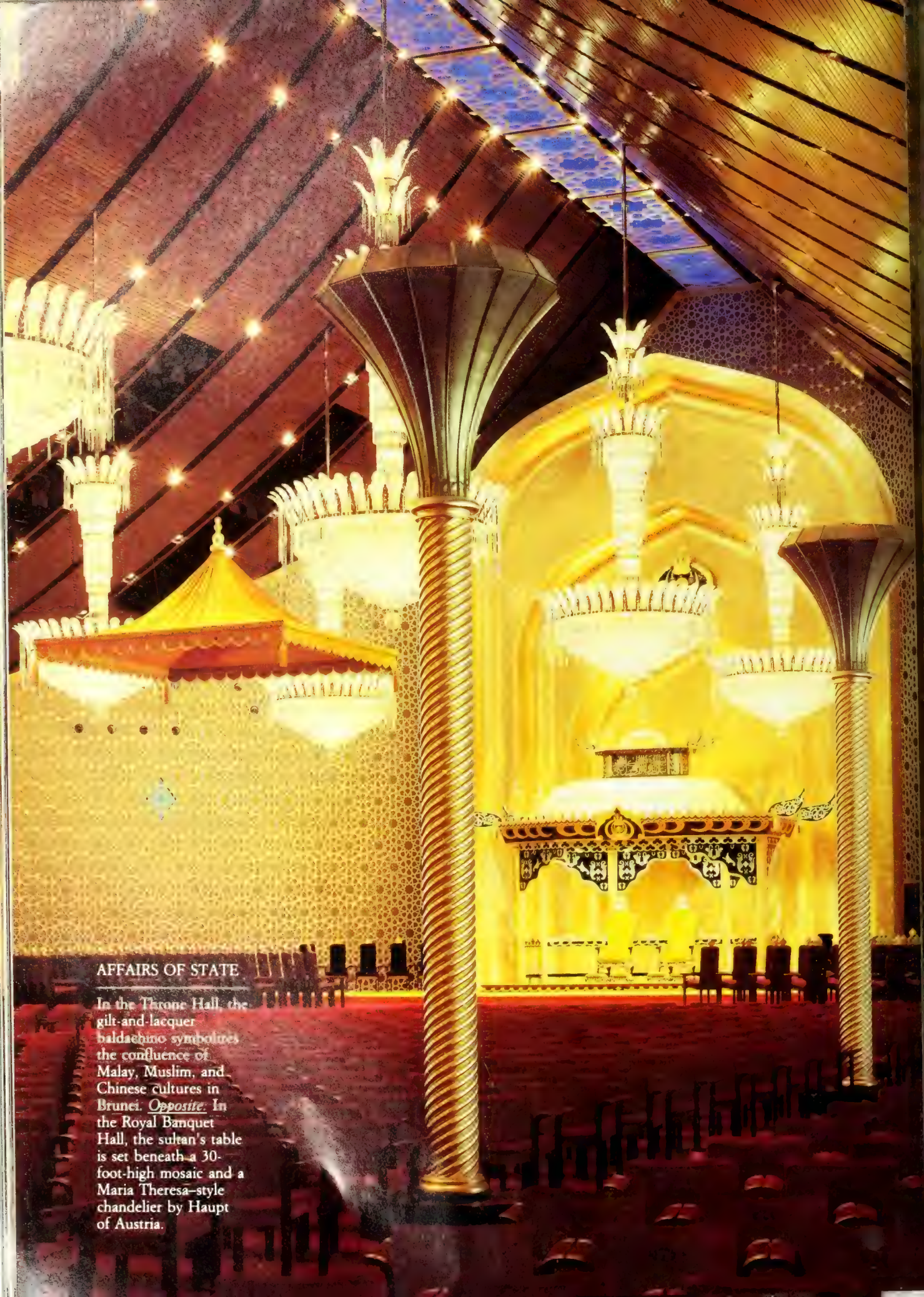
To mark his country's coming of age as a force in world events, the 38-year-old potentate built a new Royal Palace that staggered even the most jaded of the foreign guests—including the Prince of Wales, representing his mother—who attended the $15-million ceremonies that marked Brunei's first National Day last February.



STANDING ON CEREMONY

At the center of the Throne Building is the Reception Hall. Its floor is Carrara travertine, the tentlike ceiling Philippine rosewood, the walls gold metal mesh behind an Islamic star filigree. The blue stained-glass skylight was designed by Pat Keller. Beyond the gold mosaic archway is the Throne Hall.





AFFAIRS OF STATE

In the Throne Hall, the gilt-and-lacquer baldachino symbolizes the confluence of Malay, Muslim, and Chinese cultures in Brunei. *Opposite:* In the Royal Banquet Hall, the sultan's table is set beneath a 30-foot-high mosaic and a Maria Theresa–style chandelier by Haupt of Austria.





Showpiece of the festivities was the stupendous Istana Nurul Iman, the new palace that was rushed to completion in three years, in time for the end of British rule.

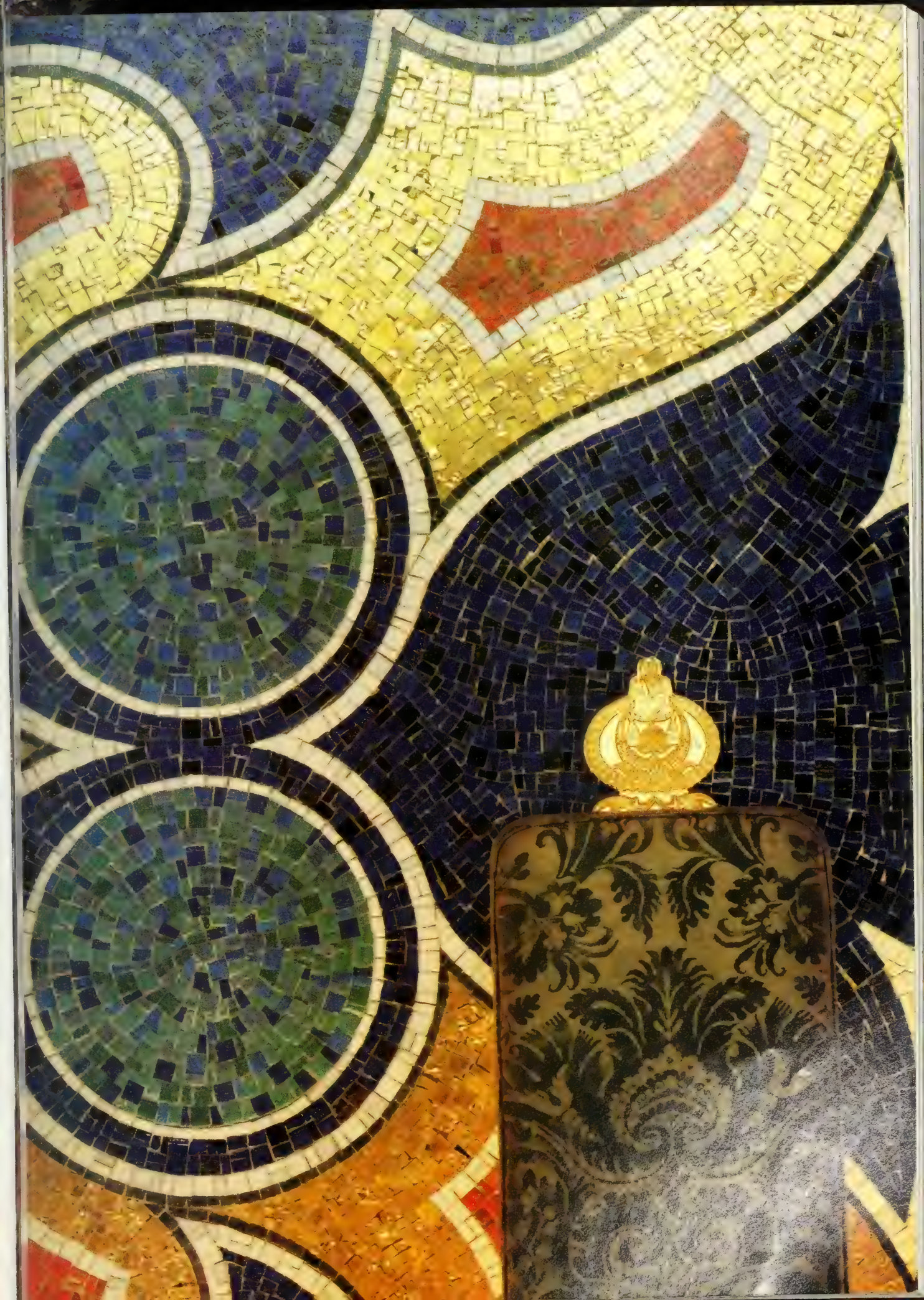
The Istana, as it is more familiarly known, can be described most accurately in superlatives, for it is unquestionably the largest and costliest royal residence ever built. With a staggering total of 1,788 rooms, it has four hundred more chambers than the Vatican. Its price tag has been variously estimated at $300 to $500 million, money gone toward such Arabian Nights touches as domes covered not in mere gold leaf but 22-karat plate, enough Carrara travertine to replicate the Campidoglio, and the largest order of crystal chandeliers in history, as well as more up-to-date amenities such as a rooftop heliport, underground parking for eight hundred cars, and an elaborate security system to repel would-be terrorist attacks. Suffice it to say that the world—not to mention Brunei—has never seen anything like it. But the Istana's fascination goes beyond the *Guinness Book of World Records* listing of its biggest and most expensive features.

The question of how a building can best serve as a symbol of its country is a concern that has faced both patrons and designers since the beginnings of architecture. In our own time it has become a particularly difficult dilemma, especially since several of the building types that have traditionally conveyed that essence of nationhood—including the temple and the palace—have either been totally transformed in this century or have practically disappeared.

That was the major programmatic challenge faced by the architect chosen for this improbable commission, the Philippine Leandro Locsin, whose previous work had consisted largely of flamboyant modern public buildings in his homeland for the Marcos regime. Here he was to provide a structure that would become the veritable emblem of a new state, one that would be equally

MAJESTIC ARABESQUE

Glittering Islamic-inspired mosaics in the palace's Surao, *left* and *overleaf,* and Royal Banquet Hall, *right* and *preceding page,* were set by imported Italian craftsmen. The high-backed chair, topped with a gilded royal insignia, is upholstered in resist-dyed cotton with a metallic finish by Fortuny.



understandable as such both to the 210,000 inhabitants of the still little-developed sultanate and to the outside world, whose attention was increasingly focused on Brunei. It was meant simultaneously to evoke the nation's burgeoning pride (and thus had to employ indigenous architectural forms) as well as its eagerness to be seen as an up-to-date equal in the international community (and thus had to be as stylistically and technologically advanced as any architecture anywhere).

Fortunately for Locsin, he had virtually limitless resources at his disposal, making it possible for him to create an instant Istana that fulfilled those weighty requirements. A 350-acre site was chosen on a bluff overlooking the Brunei River, just south of the capital city of Bandar Seri Begawan, half of whose sixty thousand residents live in the stilt houses of the Kampong Ayer, or water village, in the city's harbor.

It is in the distance, above those incongruously contrasting dwellings, that one first catches sight of the golden domes of the Istana. The palace (or more correctly, palace complex) is so immense that it is almost impossible for one to comprehend it architecturally from ground level, even from the open vantage point of the Brunei River. Aside from the glinting cupolas, the most eye-catching elements of the low-slung Istana's exterior are the dynamic curving forms that derive from what is one of the very few distinctive features of the local building heritage: the upswept, tentlike roofs of the Malay longhouse, several authentic examples of which can still be found in the jungle interior of Brunei.

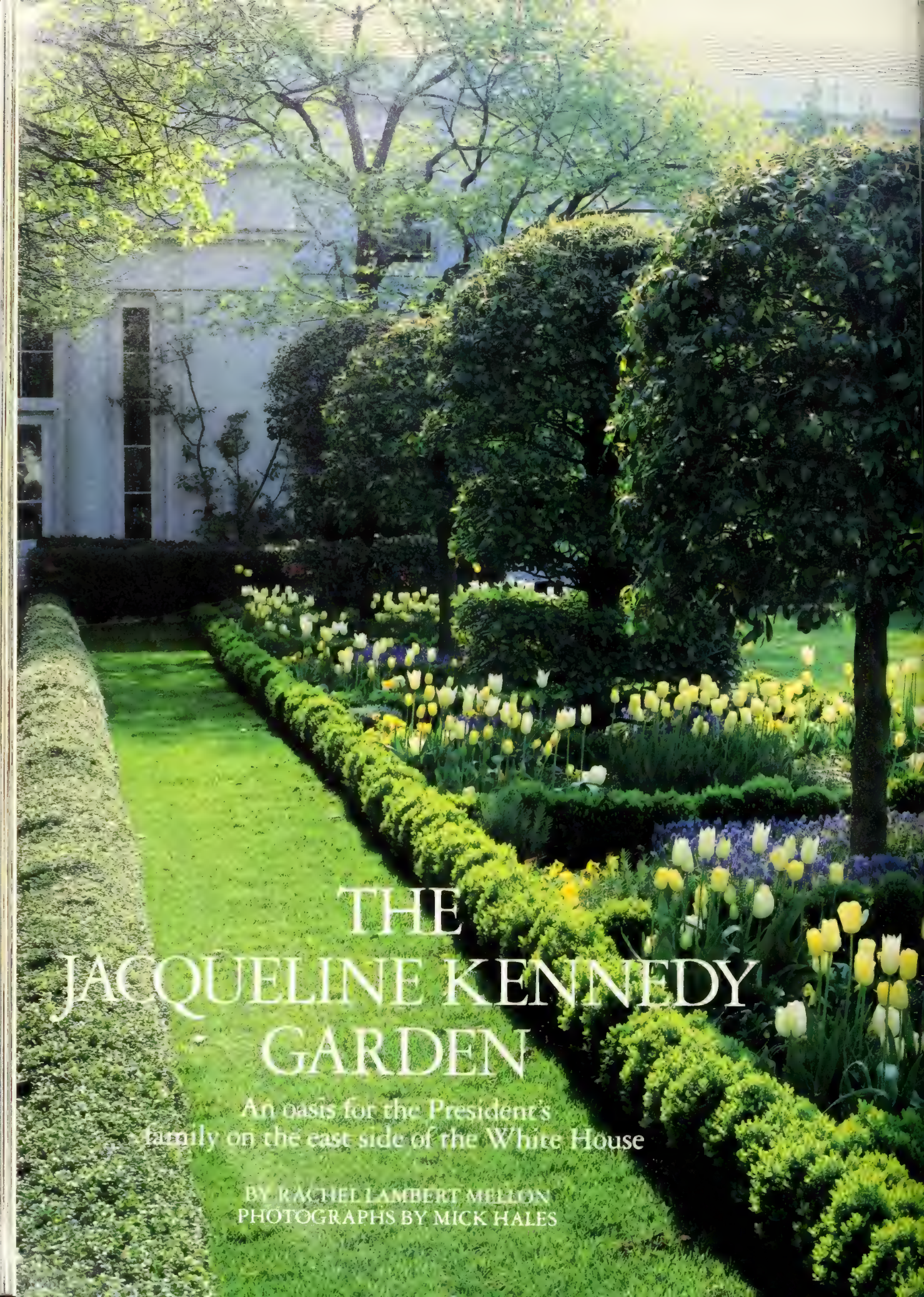
Here, the wing-shaped roofs have been magnified a thousandfold to a scale more like that of the two modern landmarks from which the Throne Building of the Istana most clearly derives: Jorn Utzon's Sydney Opera House in Australia (the object of immense *(Text continued on page 236)*



IN THE WORDS OF THE PROPHET

The Surao, or prayer room, is the most traditional interior in the palace. The shallow dome, inscribed with an Islamic star pattern, is ringed at its base with sacred texts from the Koran. At the center is the mosaic-inlaid mihrab, the holy niche of Muslim places of worship.





THE JACQUELINE KENNEDY GARDEN

An oasis for the President's family on the east side of the White House

BY RACHEL LAMBERT MELLON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES



After 20 years, the editors of
American Horticulturist have proven their
suitability as plants as well as their
sculptural beauty.



In a sequel to her account in September of the making of the White House Rose Garden, landscape designer Rachel Lambert Mellon describes working with Jacqueline Kennedy to create a new garden for the East Wing

After the completion of the Rose Garden, President Kennedy's interest in the White House gardens was to continue. It was in the spring of 1962 that he thought of the area to the southeast of the White House as a possible garden for Mrs. Kennedy and the children. This area is about the same size and shape as the Rose Garden (lacking only twenty feet in width). It did not have the historical background of the west side, and except for being kept tidy, had never been given special attention.

The task of designing another White House garden did not seem as formidable as it did before. I had become familiar with the scale of the house, and the same people who had worked with me in the Rose Garden were still there to help. They were Everett Hicks, J.B. West, Perry Wheeler, and the head gardener, Irvin Williams, whose work remains as important today as it was then. The National Park Service would carry out the work as before.

The thoughts and ideas of President Kennedy had helped design the Rose Garden. Mrs. Kennedy would give the new East Garden a different atmosphere. We had worked together before. I knew that with her capabilities for serious planning and her profound interest in history, she also had a joyous appreciation of life and of the imagination of other people.

Several weeks later we met there one morning under the large trees near the John Quincy Adams Elm, planted in 1826. The idea was new to her, and we sat for a long time putting together our thoughts for a garden.

In November 1961 Mrs. Kennedy had initiated the White House Historical Association. Aware that the American people could find little of the past inside The President's House, she had begun to renovate the public rooms and collect objects, pictures, and furniture that were part of its past, as well as to decorate them with the dignity and historical accuracy that she felt such an important house deserved. When finished, these rooms would have the same feeling as Mount Vernon, Stratford Hall, and Monticello. At the same time Mrs. Kennedy had planned the White House Guide Book, "for all of the people who visit the White House each year." She also explains in her introduction that "it was planned at first for children, who would visit the White House, to stimulate their sense of history and pride in their country."

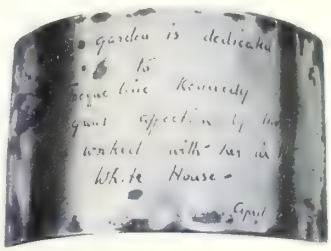
The idea was that visitors would enter from the east entrance and continue along a glass corridor before reach-



In summer, grapevines cover the arbor, *above.* On the south side lattice windows open to the distant view of the Washington Monument. *Opposite:* The bronze child, his flowerpot and trowel in hand, the work of Sylvia Shaw Judson, watches the moving water of the pool at his feet. *Below:* The silver plaque dedicating the garden. *Editors note:* At Mrs. Kennedy's request, the dedication is in Mrs. Mellon's handwriting. On the back are the signatures of Perry H. Wheeler, Irvin M. Williams, J. B. West, Elmer M. Young, James D. Nelson.

ing the main house. This corridor, like the long open porch that connects the Oval Office to the White House, would be the north boundary of the garden.

This passage facing south had been of concern because it faced the direct rays of the summer sun. Here we could plant a high hedge of linden trees, like those often seen in French parks and gardens. The trees, planted in a row eight feet apart, are kept pruned to a height of seven or eight feet, allowing one to see under them. Their spreading hedge-shaped tops would act as shade for those waiting in line. This plan was followed with a list of other possibilities. A place for the children to play. A lawn large enough for a small croquet court or badminton net and a pool of splashing water. The chef, René Verdon, had been requesting for a long time a small plot to plant fresh herbs for his kitchen. Mrs. Kennedy could see an old-fashioned grape arbor with hanging baskets of scented geraniums, and tubs of lemon verbena, heliotrope, and mignonette. Here one could read, have tea, and entertain. An arbor would be in the tradition of this large, but nevertheless Southern, country house.



There always has to be an inspiration that awakens one's imagination to begin a garden project. Mrs. Kennedy's suggestion of a child's croquet court took me back to *Alice in Wonderland,* particularly the game of make-believe with playing cards as gardeners, standing among the standard rosebushes. A few weeks before I had seen topiary holly trees in A. Gude's Nursery in Rockville, Maryland, with marvelous high chesslike shapes made of clipped American holly.

If they were still there it would be easy. They would make the outline for this new garden, and like Alice in Wonderland, the children could play surrounded by their high presence. At the base of each we would plant the herbs for the kitchen: thyme, chives, basil, dill, sage, and parsley. Among these herbs would be children's flowers to pick as children do, taking the heads without stems: marigolds, nasturtiums, pansies, and Queen Anne's lace. At one end would be the arbor,





at the other, the splashing pool.

From this outline the garden plans grew. Beds were edged with small boxwood, and the southernmost boundary was a repetition of the Rose Garden, an osmanthus hedge.

This is the garden as it is today, twenty years later. The children's flowers have gone and the croquet wickets with their tiny bells are in the attic, but the high linden hedge protects the ever-increasing lines of visitors. The grape arbor with windows of lattice looks out on the Washington Monument and has been used by the many Presidents' wives who followed Mrs. Kennedy. In early June of this year the White House staff gave Mrs. Reagan a small surprise party there to celebrate her birthday. On one of the arbor's pillars a small plaque to Mrs. Kennedy stays shined by the loyal keepers of the garden. It was her request that it be a replica of a simple handwritten message.

The garden was begun in 1963 and was finished in the spring of 1965, with the kindness and help of Mrs. Lyndon Johnson. President Kennedy never saw the finished garden.

Two weeks after Mrs. Johnson moved into the White House she invited me to come to see her. It was a hard decision to return to the White House so soon after Mrs. Kennedy had left, and I still can't remember in which room we met. In her conversation on the telephone, she had mentioned the unfinished East Garden.

She was very concerned that everything in the White House continue as before, including the care of the flowers and gardens. She asked about the East Garden and I told her about its planning; that it was designed eventually to be a garden for the President's family, and that the present design had the atmosphere of a children's story. She was sympathetic, and with a smile asked if I would finish it.

Mrs. Kennedy's involvement and caring, both inside and outside the White House, had been very important. Inviting countless people to participate, she had earned their respect over the years.

It seemed appropriate to Mrs. Johnson and me, as we talked, to name this new garden in Mrs. Kennedy's honor. But how would such an important decision be carried out, so that it would remain in history? The only other person whose name had remained as part of the house was President Lincoln. "Surely it must go through Congress," Mrs. Johnson thought aloud. Two weeks later she called to say that Congress had accepted that the East Garden be called The Jacqueline Kennedy Garden. It now had the government's stamp of approval. When I told Mrs. Kennedy, it was again on the telephone. Her voice, never very strong, that day was barely audible. □

Editor: Babs Simpson

In early spring, tulips bring the garden back to life. Later they will be followed by herbs for the kitchen mixed with annuals. The two white benches have been part of the White House Garden since 1850.





THE FINNISH TOUCH

It all began in 1902 when Eliel Saarinen and his partners made a bold experiment in modern design with their own houses at Hvitträsk

BY ELIZABETH GAYNOR
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARI HAAVISTO



A vaulted room made intimate with painted ceramic by Akseli Gallen-Kallela, rug by Loja Saarinen, lighting and furniture by Eliel Saarinen, who is represented in the stained glass triptych glimpsed at right. *Opposite:* Rendering of the studio by Eliel Saarinen, a trained artist



Seldom do architects get the opportunity to design not only a house but the whole of its interior from ornamentation to furnishings. At Hvitträsk a rare trio of talented young men was motivated to do this by the sweet taste of first success: theirs had been the much-praised design for the Finnish pavilion at the Paris World's Fair in 1900. Two years later they decided to act out their beliefs more lastingly in a new kind of inside/outside architecture based on fidelity to materials, appreciation of simple volumes, and respect for function—all radical ideas in an age of revivalist thinking. The three architects, Herman Gesellius, Armas Lindgren, and Eliel Saarinen, bought a parcel of land in the woods and started plans for a studio house for themselves—a sort of artists' paradise, experimental structure, communal living arrangement, and soon-to-be salon for all the great creators of their acquaintance.

The firm Gesellius, Lindgren & Saarinen was established in 1896 before the group had graduated from architecture school. Their union represented a balanced meeting of minds and pooling of skills. Lindgren was the scholar, Gesellius the pragmatist, and Saarinen the artist with a painter's training and eye. Together they produced a compound situated on a bluff high above Hvitträsk (White Lake) and took its name for their dwelling. Houses for the three and their wives were built, one freestanding, the other two joined by a single-story studio with skylights. The architects played up the spectacular setting in a textural structure with a rock foundation that seems to grow up out of the wooded cliff with its natural outcroppings. A system of outdoor terraces, pavilions, and porches was executed to set off the lovely open view with fretwork and dark shingles, red tiles, and climbing vines that change in autumn to the hue of the tiles.

Work began on the project in 1902. The first building to be completed was a workshop and stables, later to become the home of Gesellius. Its dark-stained timber construction and that of the partly plastered-over stony main building showed the group's admiration for strong deliberate forms and simple materials found in nature—forms and materials used in the log houses of Finland's eastern wilderness province, Karelia, and in the high-peaked medieval churches that accent the horizon. Philosophically, looking back to those primitive structures helped impel a return to the linking of building shape and interior space. But present, too, was a new way of thinking that would make use of the latest construction techniques to create a house with interflowing rooms. The three designers paved the way to modern design through the national romantic style, an important advance beyond the then-popular façade-dominated architecture.

The house seems to have fulfilled the dream of its designers. Its studio gave birth to important architecture built by the group and, after the firm split up, by Saarinen alone. Its large halls and intimate nooks, gardens, and walkways served as an enriching atmosphere for the Saarinen children, who spent their childhoods here. A wide circle of friends, including Jean and Aino Sibelius, Maxim Gorky, Gustav Mahler, and others, was notorious for all-night celebrations at Hvitträsk, sometimes playfully recorded in the sketchbooks of Eliel Saarinen.

The integration of inside and outside was abetted by the firm's desire to design the interiors and furniture and to invite some of the great artists and craftsmen of the day to contribute their work. Like the architects working in the Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts styles, they believed that the way to beautify a house was through the handmade. Saarinen designed most of the furniture in the private rooms shown here, the wing that he and his wife Loja lived in with their family for nearly twenty years. Loja collaborated on the interiors and was herself a skilled weaver. She made the rya rugs that swept over built-in banquettes and down onto the floor. Glazed tiles for the fireplaces and stoves in all the rooms were made at the Iris factory of Count Louis Sparre in Porvoo, known for its excellent handwork. The celebrated painter Akseli Gallen-Kallela did the frescoes in a dramatically vaulted room. Color was used generously to give a rich completeness to each room and create harmony with its adjacent space. A great imaginative spirit and flair for the exotic show in the furnishings, all executed with precision.

Today, Hvitträsk endures as a museum.□

THIS ARTICLE IS ADAPTED FROM *FINLAND: LIVING DESIGN* BY ELIZABETH GAYNOR, PUBLISHED BY RIZZOLI INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS INC., NEW YORK, OCTOBER 1984

With earth-red walls and exposed wood timbers, the great hall at Hvitträsk, *opposite above,* echoes the spirit of Karelia, Finland's wilderness province in the east. At the room's core stands a huge, cylindrical, tile fireplace (detail, *opposite below*). *Above:* One of many stoves in the house, whose every tile and metal appurtenance shows careful thought.







Once a nursery, the chamber *above* has been refitted with a double bed, over which hangs the study for the stained-glass triptych of Saarinen, his partner Gesellius, and the first Mrs. Saarinen, later Mrs. Gesellius. *Right:* Study's white furniture is clearly related to concurrent design in Vienna and Glasgow. *Below:* Copper pot and wood-inlay stand are typical early 20th century, typical of the house.











ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

Graphic designer Joe Lombardo knows just what he wants, but it took him four years to create an apartment that truly expresses his vision

BY JOAN AGAJANIAN QUINN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE WOLF



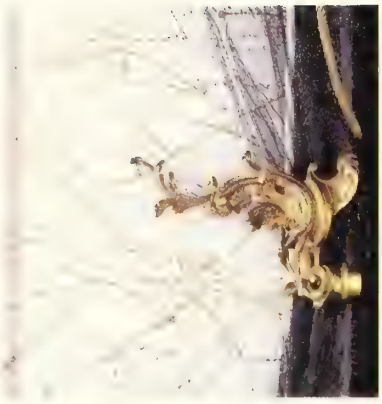
I met Joe Jewel, as he called himself then, in the mid seventies. His letters, on handmade paper, arrived in an envelope with a rhinestone in the upper-left-hand corner above the return address. I came to think of him as Joe Diamond. These letters were always written on prototype paper for his stationery firm called Write Impressions, a company that proved to be ahead of its time.

Joe Jewel goes by his real name of Joe Lombardo these days. Though he presented himself as a performance artist in the late sixties, spraying color in his normally dark hair and taking three hours to paint his clothes—shirts, trousers, and gloves—in a coordinated style, Lombardo has made his mark on American graphic and industrial design: Wisk detergent, Good & Plenty, Heinz Specialty Vinegar, and Ace comb labels and logos have all been his. Last year he won a Clio for his Heinz labels—not bad for someone who dropped out of design school. But Joe Lombardo's apartment might be his most original statement yet.

Artist and friend Barbara Nessim encouraged Lombardo to carry through on all his ideas for the apartment. In the living room, *left* and *overleaf*, he made the mantel from pieces of glass mirror, fine china, Bauer and Fiesta Ware. Painted floor incorporates the first names of good friends such as Zandra Rhodes and Divine (star of *Pink Flamingos* and *Polyester*) along with patches of trompe-l'oeil marble and the Greek key border. Poufs designed with help of a friend who is a costume designer are covered in Zandra Rhodes fabric. Atomic coatrack holds part of Lombardo's hat collection.


MOLINARI
Sambuca
BOMBAY
DRY GIN
BOMBAY





To Lombardo's way of thinking the height of good taste is very close to bad taste, and the wrong colors do go together in the end. "In doing this apartment, if I chose colors that I thought probably should not be used together at all, it almost always was a magnificent decision. When I selected the paint chips for the dining room, the first coat of black paint frightened me to death. I couldn't sleep that night, but whenever I find myself thinking this is going to be dreadful, I'm close to doing something right and that's the story of my life." Lombardo wanted to do all the work himself with a few hand-picked helpers. He spent months painting walls, floors, hanging and draping fabric, refinishing and reupholstering furniture.

In the living room, where Lombardo has drawn on the fifties, and on the antique to create a highly personal and humorous style, the walls of pink and lavender stripes are separated from the mint-green ceiling by gold- and silver-leaf molding. Three nonstructural Corinthian columns, with clear plastic trunks and square chartreuse bases splattered in black and white paint, divide the room. Lombardo has used only the capital of a fourth column as a stool. A lime- and emerald-green-striped French settee lurks between the columns on which two unusual pillows rest: one black moiré with fuzzy white three-dimensional snap-on polka dots the size of small hamsters; the other, three large green silk pompons strung on a cord with a hefty tassel on the end.

People have entered this apartment and immediately felt light-headed from the frenzy of design and strange concoctions of color and pattern. "Magic, a fantasy, a set!" they've exclaimed. But Joe Lombardo's hearing none of it. He's dead serious: "Creativity is the result of experimentation, and the reason many things are not created is that people have too many preconceived ideas about how something is going to look before it is made. This is a living space, I live here and it's very real to me. It's *my* reality—though possibly someone else's fantasy." □ *Editor: Lloyd Ziff*



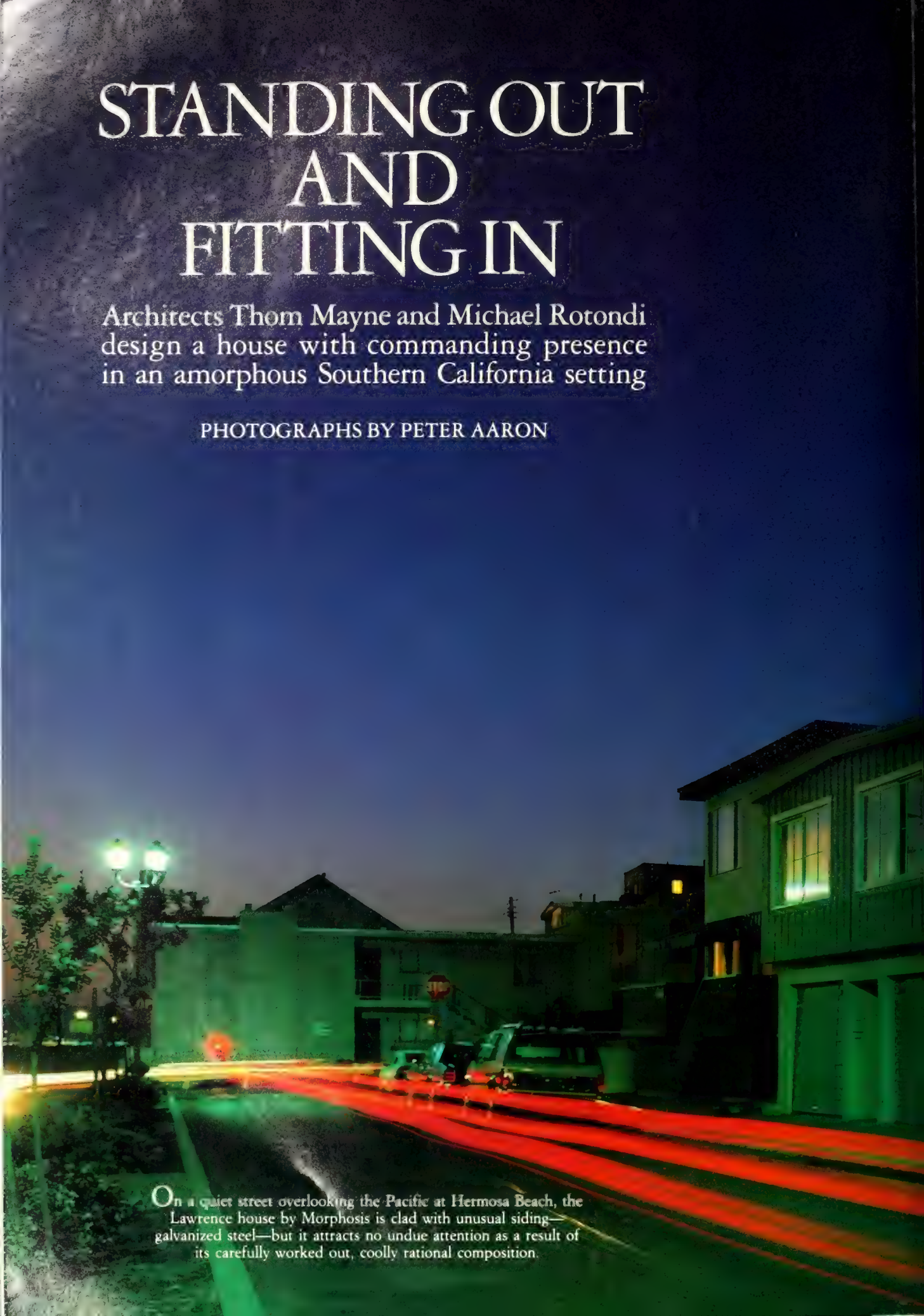
In dining room Lombardo designed the mirror and brass curtain rods. The black lacquer chairs are from Fifty/50, a store whose logo he created. Lombardo often uses two or three cloths on table, at least one with a long train. No two plates are ever alike, and real and plastic flowers are always mixed. Venetian forties chandelier made in Paris by André Arbus hangs from canopy dressed in tulle. The baroque door pull, *above,* is on the gold-splattered dining-room door.



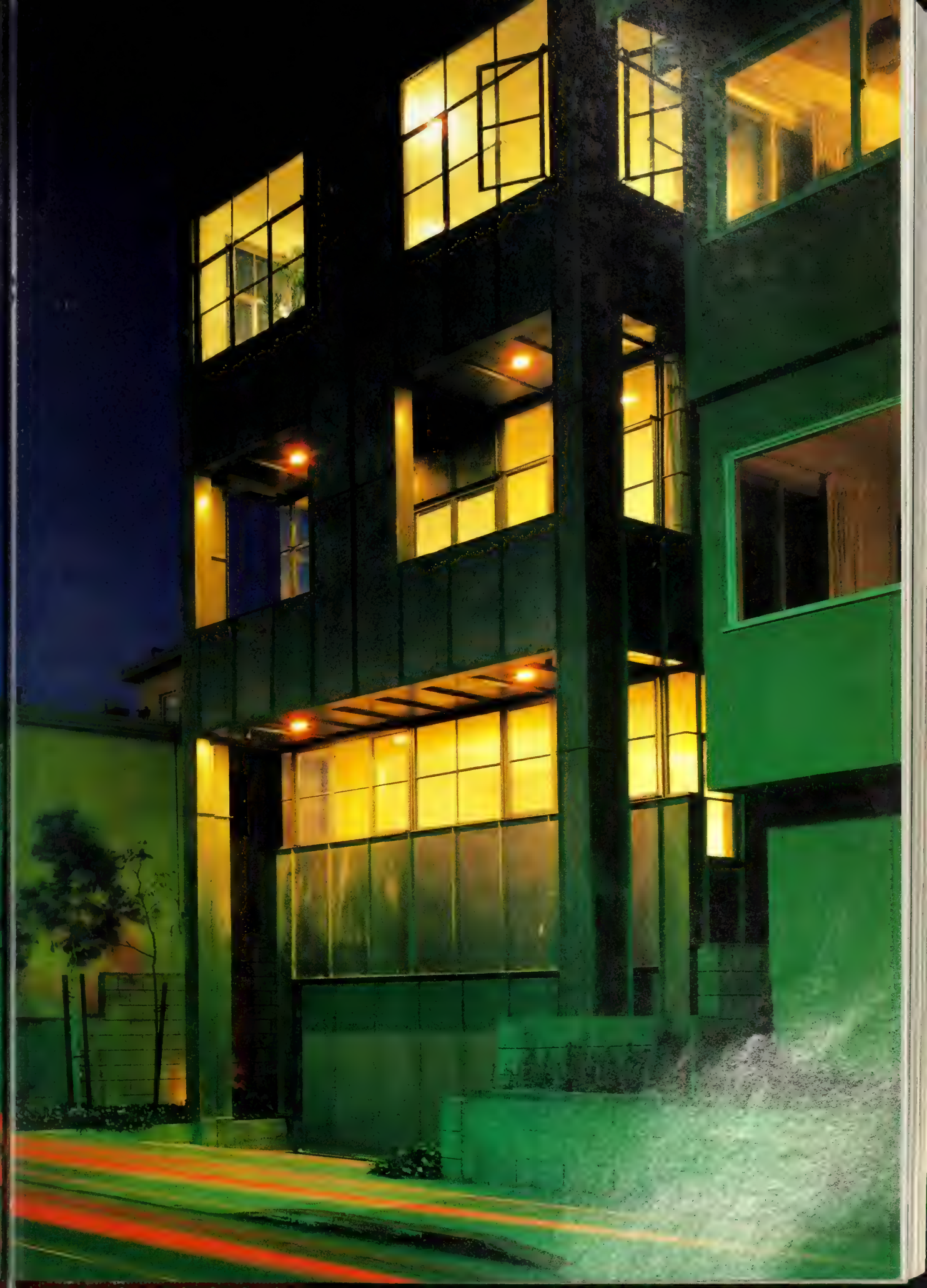
STANDING OUT AND FITTING IN

Architects Thom Mayne and Michael Rotondi design a house with commanding presence in an amorphous Southern California setting

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER AARON



On a quiet street overlooking the Pacific at Hermosa Beach, the Lawrence house by Morphosis is clad with unusual siding—galvanized steel—but it attracts no undue attention as a result of its carefully worked out, coolly rational composition.





The domestic architecture of Southern California, though the most experimental being designed in America today, still faces certain constraints. An excess of formality can look vaguely ridiculous in that most laid-back of settings, yet too much of the anything-goes approach can lead to utter chaos. The work of one of the most interesting Los Angeles firms, Morphosis, avoids both extremes. Its two principals, Michael Rotondi and Thom Mayne, have always had an essential belief in architecture as a process of compositional investigation and an interest in the sculptural handling of exterior form and interior volume. But at the same time their designs manage to seem perfectly at home even in architecturally modest surroundings, especially the beach-front communities of Los Angeles where several of their houses have been built, including their most recent (and one of their most successful), the Lawrence house in Hermosa Beach. This is architecture that can be taken for more, but it does not demand to be.

The standing seams of the siding and the nine-pane square windows, *above,* emphasize the grid that was the designers' primary conceptual pattern. *Opposite:* In contrast to the High-Tech exterior, the interior has an almost classical mood, especially around the central half-cylinder that rises the full height of the house. The pair of columns and pediment-shaped clerestory skylight (over the kitchen) add to that feeling as well.



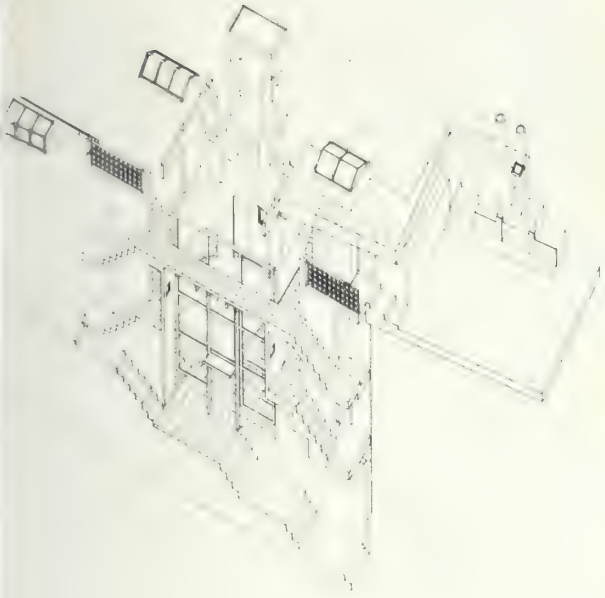


Built for a middle-aged couple who wanted to live near the ocean, the Lawrence house faces a low row of houses across the street, behind which is the Pacific. To afford the owners the view they wanted, the architects placed the main living areas on the uppermost of the house's four stories. That sense of verticality—inevitable if any significant amounts of interior space were to be wrested from the narrow 30-by-85-foot plot—has been boldly emphasized by a semi-cylindrical shaft that rises to the roof just inside the glass-block wall of the entrance, tucked away in an alley on the north side of the house. The architects' decisions to develop the interiors laterally (rather than in the conventional front-to-back format of the typical town house) and to group those areas around the rotundalike entry hall give this house a feeling of psychological spaciousness despite the fact that none of the rooms within it are physically very large.

Adding to the spatial variety that one would have thought impossible to achieve within the confines of the restricted rectangular site is the architects' extensive use of circulation spaces and level changes. Steps up and down create further stories within the four main floors, and the transition from one room to another is emphasized by making the connecting passages, whenever possible, into architectural "events." Interestingly, though some forty percent of the interior space is devoted to circulation, one does not get the impression of an endless march, typical of many Post-Modern interiors. The Lawrence house has a sure sense of presence, inside and out: one knows when one has arrived, where one is, and later that one has been there, a significant achievement in a time and at a place where such certainty cannot always be taken for granted. □

By Martin Filler. Editor: Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron

Looking up from the front door, *above,* one can see into the clerestory that surmounts the strongly vertical space. *Opposite, top left:* An axonometric drawing shows how the interior spaces have been developed laterally from the entrance on the side elevation. *Opposite, top right:* The entrance is framed with translucent glass block, which is also used in the sleekly sensuous master bath, *far right,* which in turn looks out into the half-rotunda of the central hall, *right.*











The false perspective created by angled walls gives the entry hall an illusion of greater depth. Black ceramic vase by Niedermaier. *Opposite:* The view down into the entry hall.



ENGLISHING A BROWNSTONE

Mario Buatta translates a distinctive look for a European couple in America

BY GABRIELLE WINKEL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDGAR DE EVIA

Many Americans derive a great deal of comfort from the idea that there will always be an England, and consequently English things—from *Masterpiece Theatre* to Barbara Pym novels to a distinctive style of English décor. The latter now flourishes in the decorating work of New York designer Mario Buatta.

One of Buatta's most recent Englishing projects was the transformation of an American-city brownstone into a nineteenth-century English town house at the request of a European-born writer and his family.

The basic four-story structure lent itself easily to Anglicization. Buatta was given a head start by the architectural details in the house, including the twelve-foot ceilings, tall windows, Ionic columns and pilasters in the hallways and rooms, sculptured cornices and arched bookcase niches. The furnishings were chosen in compliance with

The library's leaded-glass bay window with window seat, *right,* looks out to the rear of the house. Walls and upholstered furniture covered in Georgian Scroll chintz by J.H. Thorp. *Above:* Arched bookcases frame one of several working fireplaces. Needlepoint pillows are from Trevor Potts Antiques, New York.







The cozy library perfectly illustrates the English use of pattern and different styles of furniture. Upholstered pieces were designed by Mario Buatta. Both the Regency multicolored needlepoint rug with brown-and-gold background and the 19th-century black lacquer pembroke corner table are from Trevor Potts, New York. Hurricane lamp at right from Frederick P. Victoria, New York.



In typically English fashion, paintings in the living room, *above* and *opposite,* are hung with taffeta ribbons and bows. Yellow silk curtains and glazed walls keep the sun in. Blue-and-white petit point rug is from Stark. Empire-style jardinieres from Joseph Rondina, New York.





A red lacquered Chinese chest with a collection of porcelains faces the dining-room table, *above*. Tablecloth is made of a fabric called XVII Century Antique Damask from Scalamandré. Cadenet Stripe curtains from Brunschwig & Fils frame the garden view. *Right:* The shell-pink master bedroom, says Buatta, has "the feel of a Bonnard painting." At foot of the bed, a rococo bench. Pratesi linens on bed; curtains, headboard, and dust ruffle are Rose and Laburnum by Cowtan & Tout.

an unwritten English decorating dictum—classic English coziness and comfort come from the mixture of periods and patterns.

Favored antique furnishings found during several New York–based decorator/client shopping trips include a Chinese-style cabinet and rococo benches and several needlepoint rugs. Additional pieces were designed by Buatta and covered in an array of English prints and patterns.

Each room has the owners' "English-casual-relaxed" requirement, but perhaps none more than the library, the family's favorite. "We covered the entire room in the same fabric so the off-center window doesn't suddenly jump out at you," Buatta recalls, "and having the pattern all around makes it very cozy." (Perhaps the room's coziest touch is an often-used bay-window seat.) In the living room, where three windows insured plenty of sunlight, Buatta added yellow walls and curtains to "keep the sunshine in 24 hours a day."

In a way, Mario Buatta has proven that the sun need never set on the British Empire, or at least not on its much-loved sense of domestic style. □

Editor: Kaaren Parker Gray







LIVING THEATER

A classically inspired apartment by architects Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silvetti

BY HEATHER SMITH MACISAAC PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORMAN MCGRATH

Miniature grand entrance hall, *opposite,* with its like-scaled bull's-eye mirror and antique Italian obelisk, is tucked neatly behind one of three bays, *above,* created by the glorified column-and-lintel system.



Were a Hollywood director to seek out *the* Manhattan pied-à-terre for his latest feature, he could find no better than this one co-produced by architects Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silvetti. From the refined reception hall with its checkered marble floor and discreet staircase to the soigne main salon, the stage is set as much for a starlet's grand entrance as for the comings and goings of a client whose diamond business keeps him hopping around the world. But what would send our director from Los Angeles into complete abandon would be the indoor/outdoor staging that this apartment affords, for of the square "pied" of this Upper East Side base, almost as much is "à-ciel" as "à-terre."

Interestingly, the work and concerns of Machado-Silvetti could not be further from a stage-set approach to design. In fact, according to Machado, their scheme was "an early reaction to an early-detected problem"—that is, the overdecoration, overpolychromy, and overreferential thrusts of Post-Modern architecture. This is not to say that Machado-Silvetti chose an opposite tack; the apartment is decidedly more Neoclassical than Modern. But the architects wisely opted to let their client's request for "something serene" stand as the tallest order.

From a former renovation and a jumble of maids' rooms on the top two floors of this 1890s town house, the architects shaped a well-ordered series of spaces, using classical notions in keeping with the grandeur of the lower floors and façade. A parallel column-and-lintel construction transformed an awkwardly proportioned room into an elegant salon with clearly defined living and dining areas. Materials and objects are as carefully chosen and placed as props for a set. Brass and marble quietly enrich the columns and niches, as well as the grand fireplace that anchors the longitudinal axis. Piranesi prints of antique figures inhabit three of the four corner niches.

The fourth niche opens up to the narrow stairway that leads past the second-floor bedrooms and out to a delightfully fresh and formal version of the salon below, alfresco drawing and dining rooms reminiscent of trellis rooms in French gardens of the mid nineteenth century. Furnishing a room open to the sky with a fireplace and mirror, a famous stunt performed by Charles de Beistegui in his Le Corbusier–designed apartment, would seem to be the architects' vote for the permanence of their work. Sadly, it seems that Hollywood-style ephemerality, at least, was in on this project after all, for last they heard the client had moved and their stage had been "struck." □

Editor: Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron



Placement of the elegant furnishings strengthens the formality and symmetry of the main salon. *Opposite:* Superscaled fireplace commands the room, but by means of its rotated-cube sides and slanted-marble top and bottom, it also draws the seating into an intimate circle. *Above:* Richly draped silk curtains lend a romantic flavor to the disciplined pearl-gray interior; prints (in niches) and the upholstery of the dining-room chairs add a dash of Pompeian-red pepper. *Below:* Antique tapestry offsets the supremacy of the fireplace on the opposite wall and brings the dining room into the "garden."







In the rooftop dining and drawing rooms, equally well-suited for sunbathing or wine tasting, lattice is strictly architectural; plants are confined to clay pots. Paint spells out the final order—deep green for floors, lighter blue-green for upper wall panels, and white for the moldings, wainscot, chair rail, and fireplace.



Two views of the loft's hallway offer different perspectives on the Judy Pfaff wall piece, a lively work that the artist installed over a six-week period. The costume on the faceless mannequin, *right,* belongs to Freidus/Ordover Gallery performance artist Michael Berkowitz. Other objects include a maquette for an outdoor sculpture by Niki Logis, on top of chest by Stevan Jennis.

A SOHO ORIGINAL

New York art dealer Robert Freidus's own collection is a fresh combination of photography and contemporary art

BY MARY ANN TIGHE PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI





Doors commissioned from artist Joe Neill are the entrance to the loft. All the furniture is vintage Art Deco. On the front wall, a series of Lisette Model photographs, and, on the left, grouped images of water towers by Hilla and Bernhard Becher, exemplifying the owner's interest in showing photographers' work in depth, as well as his belief that black-and-white photos can function effectively as decorative objects.

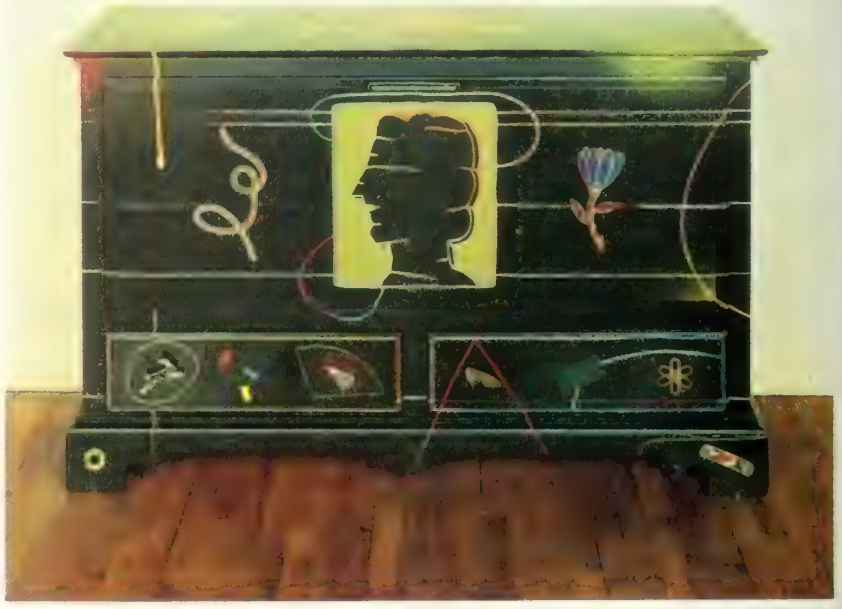
About eight years ago, because he thought it might be a good way to meet new people, Robert Freidus, a tool wholesaler in New York City, decided to turn one floor of his industrial loft building into a combination living quarters–art gallery. He had never had any art courses and didn't especially like museums. Even today Freidus says that "the idea of getting dressed up to go and visit a piece of art is strange to me." But instinctively he felt that a gallery of his own might be fun. In the metalworking-tool business, he had had experience handling objects, learning to respond to their abstract physical properties. And, in a curious way, this absence of formal training made Freidus open to any kind of visual experience, enabling him to assess contemporary work with a fresh eye.

Relying on instinct and enthusiasm, Freidus began with photography and sculpture, since, in his idiosyncratic view, "they're both really similar because they deal with real space." With advice from some experts, including a family member trained as a photographic historian, he began mounting shows, purchasing something from each of his exhibits. Then a group of major photographs was offered to him and he couldn't resist acquiring them for himself. Freidus also discovered that many artists were happy to trade their work in exchange for tools.

Before much time passed, Freidus had filled two floors of his building—each 3,500 square feet—with the evidence of his compulsion. "Collecting is like catching a disease," he reflects. "When I started selling, I assumed that if a collector bought something from me this month I could forget about him for a while. But an art collector is always buying, or at least always wanting to buy. That's the passion. Little by little I caught the craving to live with beautiful objects."

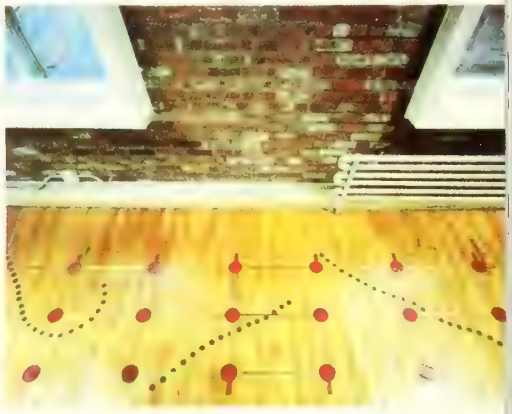
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The Richard Artschwager "piano," *far left,* was Freidus's first major purchase. The photos are from Lee Friedlander's Shiloh series. *Left:* A mélange of Deco objects occupies the loft's main sitting area. The French enamel-on-copper pots, two of them by Fauré, were obtained in a trade. *Below:* The floor near the kitchen was designed by John Christian Anderson, inspired by a photo made by the same artist, which is also in the Freidus collection.





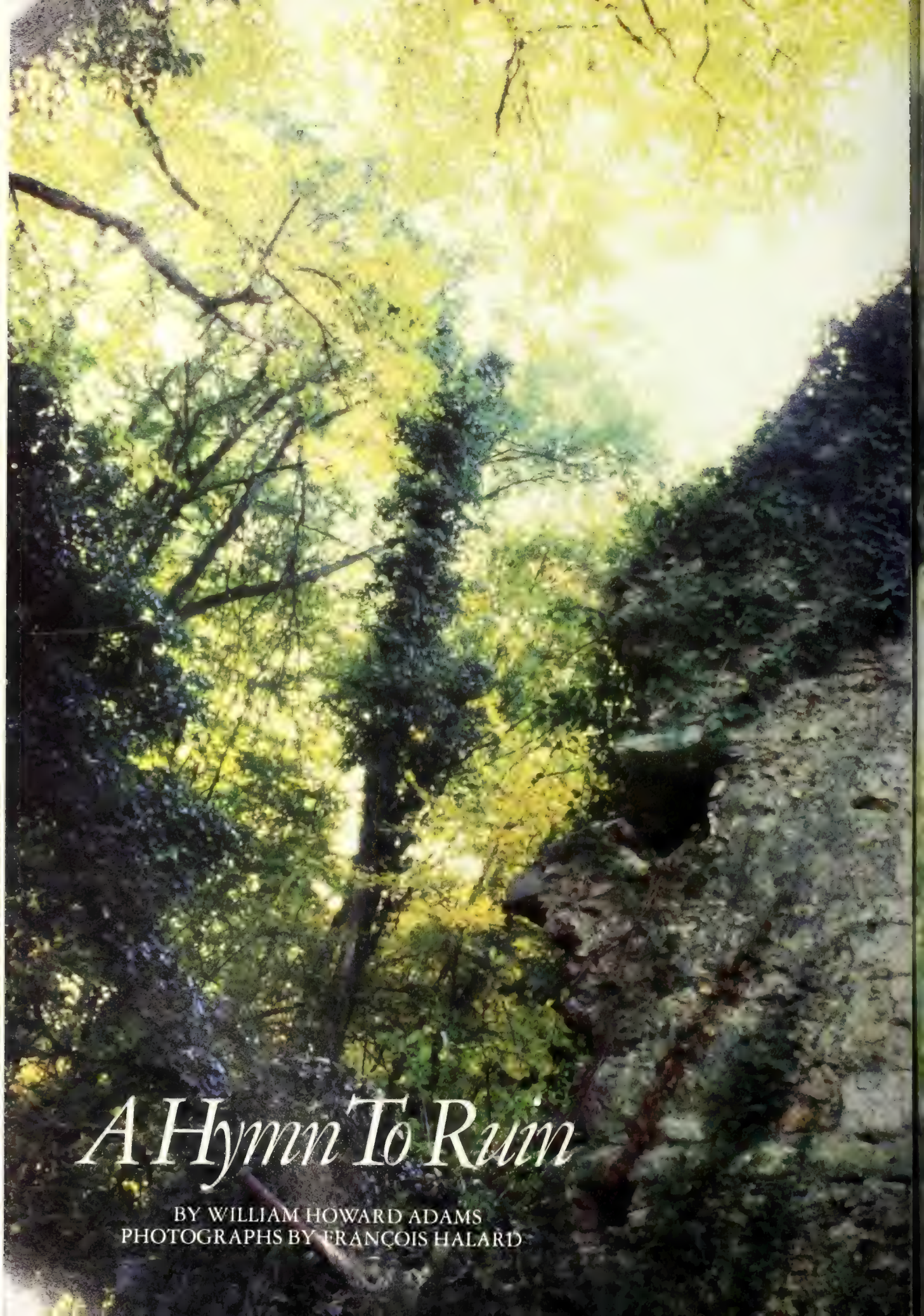
A modern evocation of a Colonial blanket chest commissioned from artist Stevan Jennis, *far left,* opens to reveal its contents, *left:* Freidus's rare complete collections of photographic series by masters of the medium, among them Walker Evans, Harry Callahan, and Duane Michals.



In the bedroom, *above,* English antiques, a Jackie Ferrara sculpture (foreground), and Joe Neill's lyrical wood relief, floating above the bull's-eye mirror. *Below:* The master bathroom, complete with sauna and a Jacuzzi in the 5-by-6-foot tub, was designed and built by artist Bill Stone. *Opposite:* Over the 1890 pool table, the landmark Police Headquarters building is visible. The owner traded artist Judy Pfaff tools in exchange for the stick figures on the window sill.







A Hymn To Ruin

BY WILLIAM HOWARD ADAMS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANÇOIS HALARD





The Désert de Retz, created by an eighteenth-century hedonist, is an outdoor encyclopedia of Romantic obsessions

Hidden at the edge of the forest of Marly yet only a few hundred yards off a major highway running west out of Paris, what is left of the Désert de Retz survives behind a great crumbling wall. Begun in 1774 within earshot of the revolutionary decade, the Désert is the most extraordinary garden folly conceived in that folly-haunted age. In the gloom the trespasser can barely recognize the phantom outlines of a seemingly remote and undecipherable past as he stumbles through an opening in the wall. The air of apprehension felt in the place is heightened by the hum of cars on the expressway nearby, an unease that also comes from the threat of the watchman's dogs announced on a posted sign. Colette claimed that no armed prowler would spend the night there and she was probably right.

The apparitions buried in the vine-infested snares of the Désert are a group of buildings—some hardly more than piles of stone—which in their original design and condition must have been one of the most delightful and audacious garden dream worlds ever invented. When Cyril Connolly first saw the abandoned park twenty years ago he called it "a splendid hymn to ruin" and in a way it has been that from the day its creator the Chevalier de Monville moved into the contrived ruin of the Column House, the main building of his pleasure grounds.

Monville's house was itself a daring conceit—a house disguised as a gigantic broken Tuscan column fifty feet in diameter and over eighty feet high—motivated by a monumental and uncompromising egoism. Concealed inside the damaged column the six-story house consisted of a central spiral staircase serving each of the floors where elegant little oval rooms were grouped around it. Thomas Jefferson, who visited the Désert with his friend Maria Cosway in 1786—"How grand the idea, executed by the remains of such a column," he later wrote—adapted the circular floor plan of the Column to his Rotunda at the University of Virginia. Windows were recessed within the deep fluting, except for the top floor, where a glass ceiling was concealed behind the jagged top of the column resembling a "fragment from some colossal building which like the tower of Babel had provoked the wrath of God," the Prince de Ligne reported.

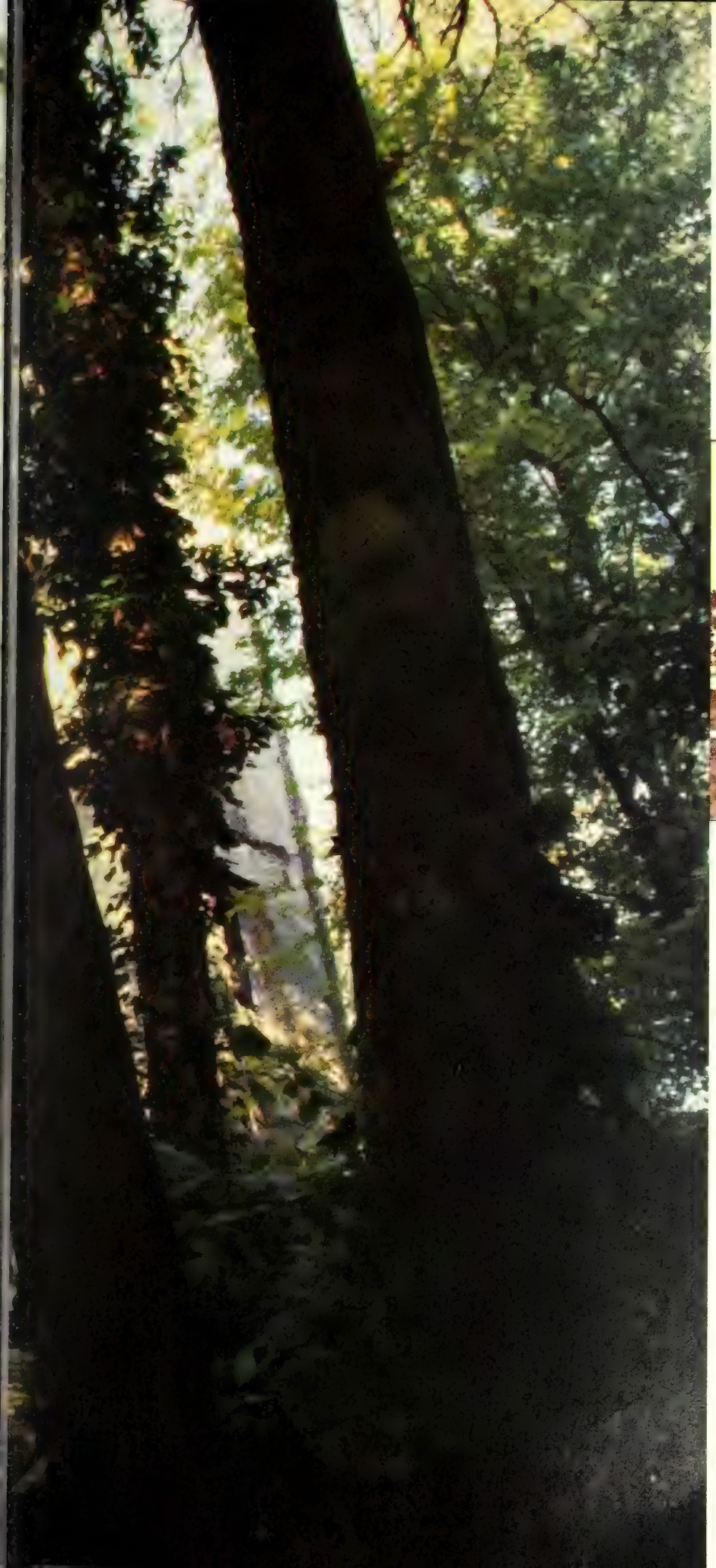
Almost as remarkable was the exquisite Maison Chinoise placed at some distance below the mutilated tower in a dell overlooking a lake. Ligne claimed it would have been approved by the Emperor of China, "un model en recherches." Damaged by soldiers during the last war, the teakwood pavilion nevertheless survived in prolonged dilapidation until it simply disappeared one day into the reeds and wild iris at the edge of the silted pond. When Colette saw it in 1953 she noted with fine irony that she was not referring to the current war in the Far East when she wrote that "one wing of the Chinese edifice has just fallen, the rest is crumbling. . . Is intervention indicated? If so it had better be soon."

Although it was too late to salvage the delicately painted and paneled retreat with its vase-shaped chimneys, the bells hanging on the corners, and the bamboo pillars, there was some renewed effort to preserve other parts of the park that were left. The collapse of the Chinese House so outraged André Malraux that he was able to push through a special law in 1966 enabling the state to make periodic repairs on what remained in spite of the private owner's indifference to the steady disintegration. Not only had the most perfect chinoiserie garden pavilion in Europe disappeared but other elements of the Désert had also vanished and much of it through willful neglect. Those had included an obelisk of painted tole, a Chinese orangery, a thatched cottage and a dairy, a military tent also made of tin, and an extraordinary entrance built in the form of a natural rock grotto. An engraving in Le Rouge's *Jardins Anglo-Chinois* shows a couple slipping into the garden for what appears to be an evening of amusement. Perched above the visitors on the rocks on either side of the entrance are two fauns holding flaming torches dramatically aloft. One might think that the fauns were a couple of Monville's servants dressed (or undressed) for the occasion, since the place conveys a certain decadent air. Research has dispelled such fantasy by turning up an inventory listing two painted metal statues that fit the figures in the plate.

What does survive—the Column House, the Temple of Pan, the open-air theater, a splendid pyramid designed to serve as an ice house, and the actual remains of a thirteenth-century Gothic church—are still capable of evoking the basic outlines of the original Jardin Anglais that like the Chinese pavilion *(Text continued on page 222)*

GROTTO ENTRANCE AND GOTHIC RUIN

The theatrical satyr-guarded entrance into the Désert de Retz from the Forest of Marly, *opposite*. Like all the engravings of the garden's original fantasy structures, this one is from Le Rouge's *Jardins Anglo-chinois*, 1785. *Preceding pages:* The surviving fragment of a 13th-century Gothic chapel abandoned in the 17th century. By the end of the 18th, deterioration had transformed it into a ready-made garden "eye-catcher" and Monville incorporated it into his romantic plans without alteration.





COLUMN HOUSE

"The column, broken at the top and 48 feet in diameter, in which Monville has devised a perfect distribution of rooms, is completely his own idea . . ." the Prince de Ligne wrote. "It is higher on one side and, from this side, one sees an immense sub-foundation which gives the impression of a height great enough to incur God's jealousy as did the tower of his first children." Trees and vines crowding in on the Column House today heighten the feeling of ancient neglect, but major structural work has reinforced foundations and walls. Careful cosmetic restoration on the exterior and in rooms are all that is needed to return the building to its original condition.







PYRAMID

A form that appealed to Neoclassical architects of the late 18th century, whose source of inspiration was the much-admired tomb of Caius Cestius in Rome, the pyramid was almost universally used as a cenotaph to a dead hero. The pyramid at the Désert, surrounded by tall, elegant, funereal poplars, actually served as an icehouse for drinks and food but its ultimate use was to be a tomb.
The restoration of the pyramid under the supervision of Olivier Choppin de Janvry was one of the first preservation operations undertaken at the Désert.







TEMPLE OF PAN

With Monville's sensual tastes it is not surprising that the pleasures of music, painting, gardening, architecture, the table and the bed dominate the organization of the Désert. Behind the half-circle façade of the Temple of Pan, which resembles the ruined Roman Temple of Vesta at Tivoli, was a small supper room—only the back wall still stands—where Marie Antoinette once picnicked with a small group of courtiers.

A HYMN TO RUIN

(Continued from page 215) was far more French in style than the foreign label it had acquired. Beneath the seemingly natural setting of trees, shrubs, and waterways was the work of the concealed artist manipulating, shaping and directing nature into the most artfully tortured garden composition. A sensuous network of paths once united the various structures and garden elements and it is possible that the appealingly perverse order of the promenade was laid out for some secret Masonic ritual.

During the eighteenth century garden design had undergone a major revolution both in England and on the Continent. The fashionable generations of the 1750s and '60s in Paris could no longer tolerate let alone support the grand châteaux and their formal garden layouts inspired by Le Nôtre's legacy. "The taste for magnificence, for great palaces and sumptuous châteaux had almost died out with Louis XIV," Louis-Philippe wrote in his memoirs, recalling the duc d'Orléans his father's generation who looked to England for its political as well as its gardening inspiration. They could not have cared less for the great baroque architectural statements left over from the Grand Siècle. "All the owners of these buildings had their little houses which they preferred; it was in these that they broke free from the restrictive grandeur of etiquette and for magnificence and display they substituted comfort and freedom... What were called English gardens won preference everywhere...."

The duke scored brilliantly among his gardening rivals when he hired the Scottish gardener Thomas Blaikie to work on his garden projects; but Blaikie's diary recorded a supreme contempt for what passed as an English garden in France and neither Marie Antoinette's Petit Trianon or Monville's Désert impressed him.

"He [Monville] had formed a garden and a path to his own designs adjacent to the forest of Marly, where he made his château in the form of an old round tower with a staire in the middle surrounded with flower pots which made a tolerable agreable effect," Blaikie wrote of the Désert in his diary. "The whole of the park was a Laberynth of rather narrow crooked walks without forming many agreable landscapes..." During a recent walk through the undergrowth on the edge of the park, I discovered the remains of an English Ha-Ha that once provided an unbroken vista from the Temple of Pan out over the neighboring field, refuting Blaikie's charge. In the distance the picturesque view framed the roofs of the ancient abbey of Joyenval, another ruin that Monville was able to appropriate into his scheme even though it actually belonged to a neighbor.





In the outdoor theater trees have today taken center stage, *top;* originally they formed wings and proscenium, *above.*

A companion of the duc d'Orléans who suffered from the same Anglomania was the builder of the Désert, Francois-Nicolas-Henri Racine du Jonquoi, Seigneur du Thuit, Chevalier de Monville, whose accomplishments seemed as remarkable as his name. Born Racine, Monville's titles were quickly added just before his brief marriage, but as Gerald Murphy, who a knew something about living well, marked, "the invented life was the o life worth living." Invention seemed be in every detail of Monville's life. is one of those charming, illusive f ures who move tantalizingly in and o of the letters and memoirs of his a but leave little firsthand evidenc What we wouldn't give for a memoir a portrait by Vigée-Le Brun of h posed at the door of the *Colonne truite* holding his iron bow and a qu er of arrows.

Without any visible means of su port aside from a minor post at co and a large inheritance, Monville e joyed a reputation as a superb danc tennis player, and horseman. He lov music and played the harp well enou to accompany Gluck. Blaikie also co firms his reputation as "the best A cher in France and perhaps in Europ I saw him at the chase shoot with h Bow and Arrow Pheesants flying a many other things equally dextereuss

Extravagant, bored, and handsom his bedroom exploits were celebra ed—though Rose Macaulay has hint that a fascination with ruins might be sign of sexual frustration. A memoria ist of the day, Chamfort, repeats th story of King Louis XV, who accuse his mistress Mme. Esparbès of sleepi with all of his subjects. "You have ha the duc de Choiseul." "He is s strong." "The Maréchal de Richelieu. "He is so witty!" "Monville." "He ha such handsome legs," she replied wit a sigh. Monville's seduction of the mi tress of the chief of police of Paris a sured him of a high-placed enemy wh managed to keep him under surveil lance as the rake moved among h high-placed friends on the eve of th revolution.

As with most amateurs with to much ability and a penchant for the ex otic—William Beckford and Lord Be ners come to mind—history has ha difficulty in accepting all of Monville' reputed achievements. No doub much of Monville's creative energy wa spent to ward off the boredom tha seemed to assail members of the *ancie regime,* a boredom that could be bro ken only with enormous effort. Hunt

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ing, music, architecture, the designing of gardens, and the compulsive changing of bed partners are the ways Monville devised for escape. His talents for survival like the talents displayed in the Désert suggest that he was more successful than others of his age.

A dashing courtier, musician, and sportsman with the architectural imagination of a Surrealist painter is simply not convincing. Hubert Robert, for example, was originally given much of the credit for the design of the Désert for obvious reasons. Later Etienne-Louis Boullée, the renowned visionary architect, became the prime candidate. The confusion has been cleared up through the work of Olivier Choppin de Janvry, the architect who has carried out extensive research. He has supervised the sporadic conservation, notably of the pyramid and the shoring up of the structure of Column House, and has established Monville's dominant role in collaboration with the otherwise obscure Parisian architect Barbiere.

Descriptions of the furnishings of the Désert are sketchy, but judging by Monville's taste and the quality of the decorations of the Paris house designed by Boullée they would have been impressive. Dufort de Cheverny's account of a visit to Monville's Paris house gives us a picture of the urbane, even operatic splendor in which Monville lived.

"I climbed eight steps and entered a very hot stucco room furnished with a magnificent stove. A valet opened and closed the double doors, and I found myself in a gilded antechamber lit by a chandelier with eight candles and by six pairs of candelabra with three branches. At the far end I saw an impressive sideboard laden with finery; a clock chimed and through the paneling, came the strains of a piece by Rameau for several instruments. I passed into the first salon adorned with projecting columns, brilliant with concealed lights and resplendent as a sunlit day. I continued and came to a most elegant bedroom all in crimson velvet fringed with gold. . . I imagined myself in a fairyland palace or in a palace from the Arabian nights. I proceeded into another room and saw Monville, superbly dressed, posed writing in front of a porcelain desk, exquisitely handsome and pleasing. . ."

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Santa Barbara, 1213 State Street
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Ft. Lauderdale, The Galleria
Winter Park, 204 Park Ave., North

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Atlanta, Perimeter Mall

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Oakbrook, Oakbrook Center
Orland Park, Orland Square Center

INDIANA:
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Topeka, Brookwood Shopping Center

KENTUCKY:
Louisville, Louisville Galleria
Louisville, Oxmoor Center

LOUISIANA:
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New Orleans, Jackson Brewery

MARYLAND:
Baltimore, Harborplace
Baltimore, White Marsh Mall
Columbia, The Mall in Columbia

MASSACHUSETTS:
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Boston, Copley Place
Boston, Faneuil Hall Marketplace
Burlington, Burlington Mall
Hyannis, Cape Cod Mall
Nantucket, 14 Centre Street
Salem, Pickering Wharf
Sturbridge, Rte. 20 at Sturbridge Village

MISSOURI:
Kansas City, The Country Club Plaza
Kansas City, Bannister Mall

NEBRASKA:
Omaha, Westroads Shopping Center

NEVADA:
Las Vegas, Fashion Show Mall

NEW JERSEY:
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Hoboken, 706 Washington Street
Moorestown, 33 E. Main Street
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Princeton, 53 Palmer Square West
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Norfolk, #240 The Waterside

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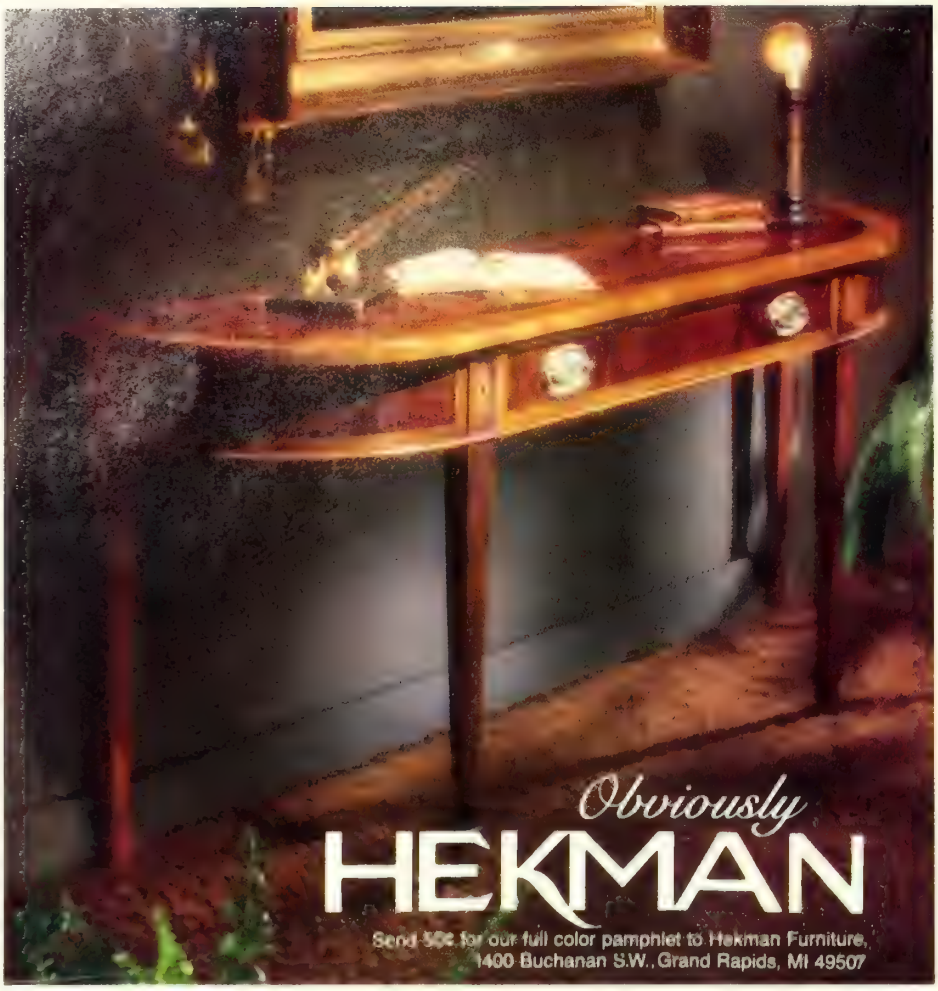


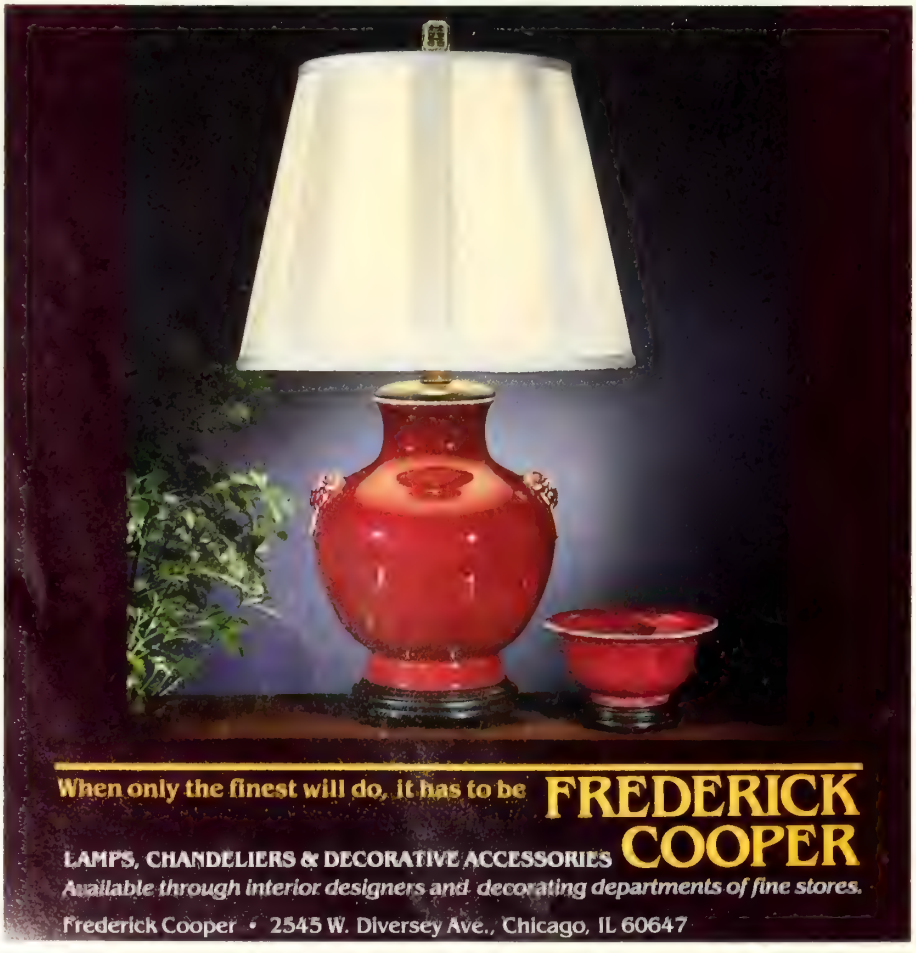
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A HYMN TO RUIN

In the next room the visitor discover a windowless Turkish salon lined wi mirrors and lit by a skylight. "Tl doors of this enchanting retreat mov in slots conforming to the shape of tl room. A secret device in the wall, wh lightly pressed, opened them with ma velous expedition." Cheverny fair swooned when he heard yet anoth small orchestra of wind instrumen playing in a hidden alcove nearby.

The furnishings at the Désert we undoubtedly much simpler in keepin with a country retreat. The groun floor contained the salon, the dinin room, the main bedroom, and the su lit entrance hall lined with terra-cott pots of heliotropes, geraniums, carn tions, periwinkles, and arum lilies. Th furniture was painted gray and covere with toile de Jouy. The windows wer hung with plain fabric bordered with toile de Jouy in Indian patterns. Lik many men of the Enlightenment, Mor ville was fascinated with scientific ex periments so he installed a laborator on one of the upper floors.

When Mrs. Thrale saw Monville Paris apartments, she called them "ob scene." The nude female figures paint ed in trompe l'oeil on the columns i one of the rooms were too much for th English visitor. The place struck her a having been "conceived on the mode of the apartments of a Roman emper or." Such style in his living and perso made some people, especially blue stocking ladies like Mme. de Genlis the governess of the Orléans children uncomfortable. Mme. de Genlis's de scription of the Chevalier—"a grea suitor, young, a widower, rich, an very handsome, noble and romanti but not of the court"—has something of the tone of a rejected admirer. Sh probably only meant that he was no among the 942 families who coul trace their genealogy to the fourteenth century thereby qualifying their de scendants for admission to the roya circles of Versailles according to Loui XV's formula for solving the housing problem.

Jacques de Tilly thought Monvill mediocre but admitted that he ha what it took to charm and be liked b the most distinguished people of hi day. It was an impressive set and it i said that Marie Antoinette visite Monville at the Désert, where he kept botanical library, to get his advice o

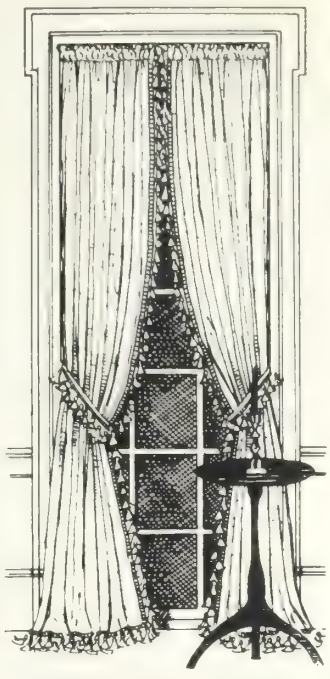
rdening matters. The Queen overoked the fact that her host had once en the lover of her enemy Madame u Barry as she pursued her horticulral interests with her neighbor.

He was having dinner with his friend e duc d'Orléans when the latter was rested by the revolutionary commite in 1793. When the duke protested s arrest to Monville, his companion, ho was preparing to eat a freshly illed sole, coolly replied, "It is terrie, my Lord, but what can you exct? They have gotten all they want om your highness and are simply dog with you what I am doing with this mon squeezed of all its juice." And ith that, he tossed the lemon halves to the fireplace, reminding the duke eat his sole while it was hot.

Monville survived the revolution ut his Désert was confiscated, the furishings sold and some of his more exic trees and plants, including some om America, were taken to the bonical gardens in Paris. In order to ve his skin, he tried to sell his town ouse to his friend the playwright eaumarchais for £400,000 but without success. An Englishman with the nlikely name of Disney Ffytche ought the Désert in a sale of confiscatd property during the chaos of 1792. Ionville in the meantime hid in the ıe de Clichy entertaining and charmıg friends of all political persuasion. Ie died in his bed in April 1797 after sacrificing himself to all the girls, a ifferent one each night," Tilly wrote. Iaving passed through a number of inifferent hands in the nineteenth and ventieth centuries the Désert is now wned by a Paris investment group, ot a comfortable curator of such a reasure. An international effort could till be mounted to save and restore Ionville's garden fantasy before all is ost; but as Colette wrote thirty years go, it had better be soon. □

CORRECTION

n the August book column, *Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue* by Richard Oliver hould have been listed as part of the American Monograph Series, which is ublished by the Architectural History Foundation and distributed by The MIT Press.

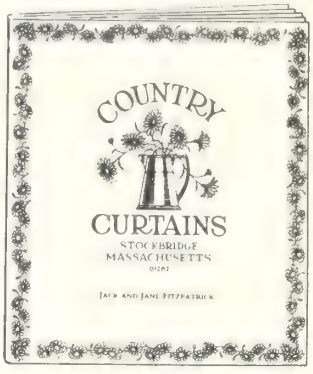


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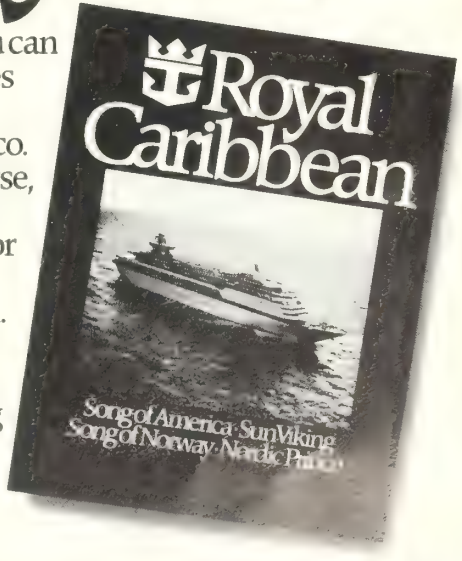
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(Continued from page 130) Donghia's achievement here as a decorator, not unlike Ralph Lauren's as a designer, lies not only in his having restored a Colonial classic but in his having adapted that classic to a style of life markedly American in its comfort, simplicity, and ease.

"The air of the fifties was in the house," Donghia concedes, "but the scale and proportions were so wonderful—high arches and high, high ceilings. And practically no walls—it was all windows, just big giant windows everywhere to open up and let the air of the fifties out! And ten-foot-high mahogany shutters, and mahogany floors. I added moldings, changed all the trims, stripped coats of paint off those shutters, and polished the brass I found underneath.

"I'd already decorated the Laurens' Fifth Avenue duplex, and the one thing Ralph has always said to me is, 'Angelo, I want it to be not good but great. So go all out.' You can see why he's my ideal client."

With Lauren's encouragement, Donghia even decided to oversee the landscaping himself. "It was something I'd never done for a client before," he confesses. "But I'd had a lot of experience with my own house in Key West, which I subsequently sold to Calvin Klein. Anyway, in places like Jamaica and Key West, you can't go wrong as long as you garden with a machete—you just have to keep slicing everything back, it grows so violently."

After cutting nature down to size, Donghia rectified a man-made mistake. "We tore out the pool," he says. "It was too small for the scale of the house, so we designed a bigger one. There was an old coral stone wall near the pool, intertwined with really thick vines, and I had the idea of putting a big wonderful Jamaican shingle roof over it. We made a bar in there, and a place to eat."

We drift back to the main house; the not unmysterious scents of botanical exotica outside mingle with the delicious smell of flowers coming from within. Donghia pauses at the threshold to explain that the previous owner had used the entrance that went right into the living room. "I designed a fountain and water-lily pond to block that access. And I reactivated a little entry hall that wasn't being used.

"Ralph and I discussed all the fabrics for the house, which are really just white duck and white canvas. With Ralph, everything is always basically white, white or blue. He doesn't like pattern. That's very much his feeling about things—he likes calm and peace. He has to deal with color all day and he wants a change when he goes home."

In Montego Bay, Donghia found a highly skilled cabinetmaker; he also ransacked the shops for native crafts, coming away with several rugs made out of banana leaves. The antiques for the house he bought in Los Angeles and New York—"mostly that wonderful thirties bamboo."

"My own win on the house," Donghia says, "is that when it was finished it didn't look as if I had done it, it didn't look as if it had been done. It just looked natural, underdecorated. Anything that's overdecorated Ralph hates. He loves simplicity—simplicity with style. And he hates lack of quality.

"I wear only Ralph Lauren," Donghia makes a point of mentioning. (The son of a small-town Pennsylvania tailor—his first job, at age eleven, was decorating his father's shop—he went on to be elected to the International Best Dressed List's permanent Hall of Fame.) Does Donghia try to im-

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merse himself in the ambiance of every client, the way an actor researches a part? If, for instance, he were decorating a house for Claude Montana, would he wear Claude Montana clothes to get in the mood for the job? "That's not my look," he replies matter-of-factly. "I like Ralph's classic clothes. That's why we see eye to eye—because we're both drawn to classicism. You can't date his clothes, and that's the way his houses look, too.

"Ralph Lauren's clothes," says Kennedy Fraser, the fashion critic of *The New Yorker* and author of *The Fashionable Mind: Reflections on Fashion,* "are comfortable-looking, self-assured, profoundly satisfying—they have a distinct air of peace; they happen even to be quite pretty and flattering. In other words, they're perfectly nice, you know, but the world was always full of things just like them that were perfectly nice but that were never quite given this kind of uniform coherence, this cohesive image that's very bound up with the way one lives and what one is socially.



McGuire chaises around the redesigned pool

"It's even gone over well in England. Which is interesting, because Calvin Klein, I don't think, ever made a mark there at all. And Ralph Lauren is selling the English look—the *idea* of Englishness—to the English! That's what's so ironic. And that's what's so clever. Of course, it *is* somewhat modified—it fits better than the real English gentry look."

But Ralph Lauren is more than a catalyst marvelously adept at pulling threads out of the social atmosphere and summing them up through a product; he is a creative stylist who in 1976 became the only American designer ever to win Coty awards for both men's and women's clothing.

Anne Hollander, an art historian with a special interest in costume history, and the author of *Seeing Through Clothes,* places Ralph Lauren high in the catalogue of costume design. "The most remarkable development in costume in the last three hundred years," she maintains, "was that of ready-to-wear garments: that is, how to make a whole lot of clothes fit, with minimal alterations, a whole lot of people—particularly in male dress, which was begun and promoted, mainly by Americans, at the very beginning of the nineteenth century and which came out of the mass-producing of military uniforms. It was not until a hundred years later, the beginning of *this* century, that women's mass-produced clothing became interesting. Ralph Lauren is a wonderful way-station in the history of this progress, because of course he uses those classical characteristics of tailoring that made it possible for one thing to fit many people. He goes back to those magnificent inventions that are still not out of date, such as lapels, neat shoulders, stitching—the fundamentally conservative-looking design that is revolutionary in its origins. And the way you can tell it's original and revolutionary is that it's still good, it works, and everybody loves it."

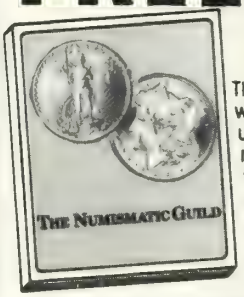
The quality of the product aside, people like the label—it's a kind of instant club. Less than ten years after Lauren chose the name Polo—because, he says, it had "that vaguely English sense to it"—Prince Charles was sighted wearing a knitted cotton crewneck Rugby shirt with the Polo insignia during a tournament at the Palm Beach Polo and Country Club—living proof of French sociologist Jean Stoetzel's definition not of polo but of fashion: "adventure without risk."

Anthropologist Lionel Tiger sees the Polo insignia as a symbolic statement of a material kind, "a readily recognizable cross-national totem that defines the owner as somebody with notions of taste that are shared by similarly affluent people"—indeed, as part of a whole tendency toward the metropolitanization of systems of taste.

Apart from the immediate assertion it makes of who one is in socioeco-

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nomic terms, "what is fascinatir about the Polo emblem," Tiger adc "is how readily people are willing comport themselves in terms of son hierarchy that has nothing whatever do with their own family or station life. This emphasis on displaying bran names signifies a commitment on th part of a large contemporary public enter into the realm of heraldry—commitment of an almost Renaissanc kind, the Renaissance being the age individual display within a social co text." Indeed, as Roland Barthes ha reminded us in *The Fashion Systen* "in the Renaissance, as soon as one g a new costume, one had a new portra done."

Ralph Lauren's portrait comes insi tently to mind: his presentation of se in everyday advertising life—silve haired, sun-tanned, smiling, casuall dressed in well-broken-in denims an trademark cowboy boots, leading th life of pleasure and comfort founde upon what Anne Hollander calls "th perfect, original beauty of his kind garment."

But clothing is only one part of th environment. Ice buckets, flatwar sheets, and towels are also part of tha continuum which is pleasure. So Ralp Lauren who began with clothing, nex to the skin, can—without a pause an without its seeming in any way odd—move outward from the skin to th room, and "dress the home." He re cently launched, in collaboration wit the textile firm of J.P. Stevens, nin complete "lifestyle" collections o "home-furnishing theme packages, including more than 2,500 individua pieces. The collection was hailed as th most complete of its kind conceived b a fashion designer.

The names of Lauren's nine lines ar characteristically iconographic "Thoroughbred," "New England, "Color," "Cottage," "Cricket," "Mar iner," "Safari," "Log Cabin"—in spired by his new ten-thousand-acr Colorado ranch, the "RRL" (for Ralp and Ricky Lauren).

And finally the "Jamaica" line—"a island of refinement in home furnish ings . . . a romantic fantasy environ ment . . . an aura of old-world elegance in a contemporary milieu"—inspire by his Montego Bay estate. Thus d Ralph Lauren's dreams and the world he lives in coincide. □ *Editor: Kaare Parker Gray*

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(Continued from page 162) admiration in the Far East) and Eero Saarinen's TWA international terminal at Kennedy Airport in New York. These swooping roofs, together with the gilded Islamic domes (one surmounting the Surao, or prayer room, the higher one enclosing elevator equipment), make the overall effect of the exterior of the Istana much like that of a peculiar pavilion from the 1964 New York World's Fair.

Entering the palace is no easy matter, even when one is expected. Although the Istana Nurul Iman has an impressive front gate—behind which stand Gurkha guards in Brighton Pavilion–style sentry boxes—one's arrival route is surprisingly circuitous. A heavily manned (and armed) pillbox to one side of the main highway fronting the Istana is the initial point of vehicular entry (you had better not arrive on foot), and for security purposes the long and winding road from there to the palace snakes around for miles before one arrives back behind the unused front gate, ready to begin the final ascent up the steep incline to the front door of the Istana.

Actually, one will be allowed to use that ceremonial portal only if one is a visitor of considerable importance otherwise your car will be directed t one of the two gaping garage entrance that flank the travertine-and-rosewoo porte-cochère. Beneath the palace is huge, immaculate, and depressing ca park, certainly a nonregal way of arriv ing at any building, especially a roya palace. Except on great occasions o state, the garage is eerily empty beyon the section in which the sultan's exten sive fleet of automobiles is kept: Rolls Royces in a spectrum of black, white red, and gold, Lamborghinis and othe sports cars in a similar array of colors some sixty luxury conveyances in all.

If the typical Muslim home pos sesses a strict separation between pub lic and private domains, then that i especially true of the Istana Nuru Iman, for it is not just a residential pal ace but a state palace as well, accom modating many functions that a capito building would fulfill in other coun tries. Thus the public areas of the Is tana seem very public, indeed institutional, rather like a cultural cen ter or a convention hall.

In the manner of traditional Islamic houses, the palace revolves around an open courtyard, here composed o four equal-sized rectangular spaces that together form one immense atri um. Three of them have reflecting pools and fountains (including one with a canopied music pavilion that could have been designed by Philip Johnson during the sixties); the fourth is an undergrown sunken garden. Although the materials are expensive (travertine walls and pavements, rosewood coffering overhead), the at mosphere does not feel tru ly luxurious. Yet it is remarkably re freshing, a reminder of the psychologically cooling effect that the sound of splashing water can have even when the temperature is 100 and the humidity 100 percent.

A seemingly endless red carpet stretches down the center of the colonnade-encircled courtyards from the formal front door to the stairways that link the entry wing to the Throne Building—the longhouse to end all longhouses—stretched laterally behind it. Even though by now Locsin's tendency to mix his stylistic metaphors has become inescapably apparent, one is still a bit unprepared for his having gone quite this far.

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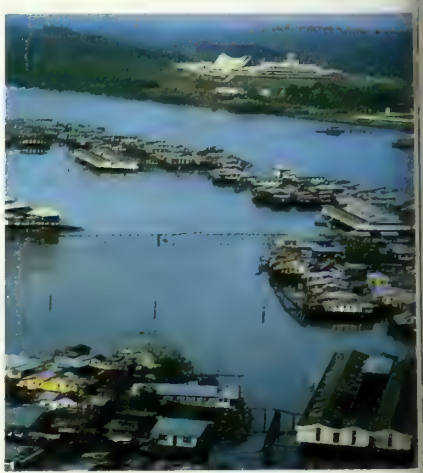
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Standing beneath the glass-roof (and, not surprisingly, stifling) Hig Tech space frame that shelters t stairs that flank an incongruous esca tor, one can view the modernized Is mic courtyards, the supersca folkloric Throne Building, the Po Petrodollar domed tower, and the co crete-balconied private living quarte that are woefully reminiscent of a cc porate headquarters building in Ne Jersey. There is something for ever one, and something from almost eve phase of modern architectural histor It has everything except coherenc and that diminishes the impact that th Istana would have had if the archite had been able to stick to just one of h many stylistic ideas.

The interiors of the Throne Buil ing, however, do quite a bit to compe sate for the feeling of confusion th has set in by this point in one's visit the Borneo Versailles, for here's whe the real fun begins. The interio throughout the palace, designed by th New York–based (but international affiliated) firm of Dale Keller Assoc ates, certainly do not lack for the kin of astounding glamour and exoticis that one has come to the ends of th earth in search of. Their scheme ha those qualities galore, and as prepo terous as much of it seems at first sigh it succeeds surprisingly well in provid ing an image of a certain appropriate ness for the ambitious patron of th grandiose project.

The gigantic Throne Building is di vided into three approximately equa segments: the central Reception Hal



Beyond the stilt houses of the Kampong Ayer rise the gold dome of the Istana. (For another view, see page 12.)



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through which one enters; to the south, the Royal Banquet Hall; and to the north, the Throne Hall. It is hard to place a stylistic definition on what the Keller firm has created here, except to say that it seems to derive in large measure from bygone Hollywood.

It is impossible, for example, not to be reminded of *The Wizard of Oz* as one approaches the gold-mosaic triple arch that surrounds the doorway to the Throne Hall, or not to think of *The King and I* as one slowly advances toward the gilded, wing-eaved canopy beneath which the sultan and his queen (the first of his two concurrent wives) sit on state occasions. As a dozen two-ton crystal chandeliers tinkle noisily under the air-conditioning vents, one would not be startled if "The March of the Siamese Children" were to commence forthwith. In fact, the interiors recall not just movies, but movie palaces: is there, perhaps, a Loew's Borneo or a Grauman's Malay Theater?

Technically, these vast spaces are as adeptly worked out as those theatrical comparisons imply: the lighting is frankly stagy but superb in creating just the right effects, especially when the sultan and his diamond-studded queen are ensconced on their thrones and bathed in a positively supernal aura. In that hall, which seats two thousand (on contemporary Danish chairs that are stackable but bear no resemblance to conventional auditorium seating), perspectives were carefully worked out to provide unbroken sight lines for the concealed television cameras that record ceremonies of state for the Brunei channel that broadcasts little else except the sultan's daily public appearances. Loudspeakers are cleverly concealed in flaring, golden-twist torchères that native Bruneians are convinced are based on traditional types, but which in fact are the decorators' pure invention.

At the other end of the Throne Building—at a stately pace, it is a five-minute walk from throne to dinner table—the Royal Banquet Hall is another marvel of mass logistics. What else could one term an arrangement that allows for the synchronous feeding of 4,500 people—the equivalent of 2.25 percent of Brunei's total population? That feat was actually carried off during the recent National Day celebrations, at a dinner that would have made Belshazzar's Feast seem like a potluck supper. In truth, the Royal Banquet Hall proper can accommodate only an intimate group of 450 to dine in uncrowded splendor, so the remainder were seated in the adjacent open courtyard and under the mirror-image reinforced concrete pavilions (inspired by Le Corbusier's famous capital city of Chandigarh in India) that flank it. On the story beneath the Royal Banquet Hall are enormous service kitchens, which come to life only on such grand occasions.

Acting as a kind of buffer between the most public and most private portions of the palace is a whole series of lesser rooms suitable for a host of events of varying hierarchic importance: there is the so-called Sitting Hall, which is in fact a secondary throne room, the seat of grace there being a very ornate Chippendale armchair under a gold-and-silver brocade-draped canopy; the Titled Persons' Room, a parliamentary-looking council chamber paneled in dark

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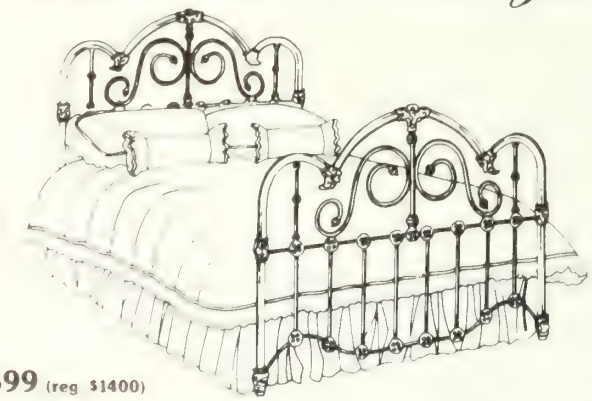

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green velour and verde antique ma ble; and a series of audience roon used for visits of the least formali above the personal level. These rang from those with the chilly modern an nymity of a VIP lounge at an airport t the most eye-filling of them all, an apr cot octagonal salon.

Here the incredibly ornate furn ture—bulbously baroque armchai and settees heavily gilded and upho stered in the most opulent velvet bro cade imaginable—is ranged aroun the perimeter of the room in the cha acteristic Arabic fashion, both to obv ate hierarchic differences and avoi the gaffe (and, in days gone by, th danger) of sitting with one's back t another. Windowless (as all the pre ceding rooms are), devoid of art, an swathed in a cocoon of plush fabrics, i is so hermetic that even the suffocatin heat of the outdoor portions of the pal ace comes as a welcome relief after





An octagonal audience room, *top,* is encircled by an ornate suite of heavily gilded furniture, *detail above,* upholstered in opulent velvet brocade.

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Certainly the most pleasing of the interiors at the Istana is the Surao, or prayer room, a domed circular sanctuary that is as visually refreshing for the infidel as it is spiritually restorative for the faithful. A calming oasis of blue and white amid the unrelieved richness of the rest of the Royal Palace, the design of the Surao was closely monitored by the Grand Mufti of Brunei, the sultanate's spiritual leader. He was responsible for the calligraphy of the Koranic verses that encircle the room; the inscriptions were dispatched to Saudi Arabia for proofreading before they were sent to England to be cut from brass sheets character by character. The Grand Mufti also decreed the moving of the mihrab—the sacred niche that must point precisely toward the holy city of Mecca—when he found it to be three degrees off from his calculations. The Surao's columns thus had to be repositioned as well, but this was a less difficult alteration as they are merely decorative, not structural.

Thus far, we have accounted for only very few of the Istana's almost 1,800 rooms. Where are all the others? For the most part, they are used for governmental and administrative purposes, as well as maintenance, mechanical services, and storage. Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah is also his country's Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, and Minister of Internal Affairs (his father, who abdicated in his favor in 1967, is Brunei's Defense Minister, one of the sultan's brothers is Minister of External Affairs, while another is the Minister of Culture, Youth, and Sports, as well as Deputy Minister of Finance, making the government of Brunei pretty much a family affair); the monarch's offices are located in the Istana, as are those of the army garrison maintained there for his protection.

Actually, the sultan and his family occupy a private suite of only about twenty rooms, although the residential north wing of the palace contains space enough for eight additional duplex suites, which have been left unfinished pending the future needs of the ruler's children (a son and five daughters, by his first wife, the queen, who now awaits another child; one son by his second wife, who is also expecting; it is said that the sultan will soon take a



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third wife, four being the limit allowed by Islamic law).

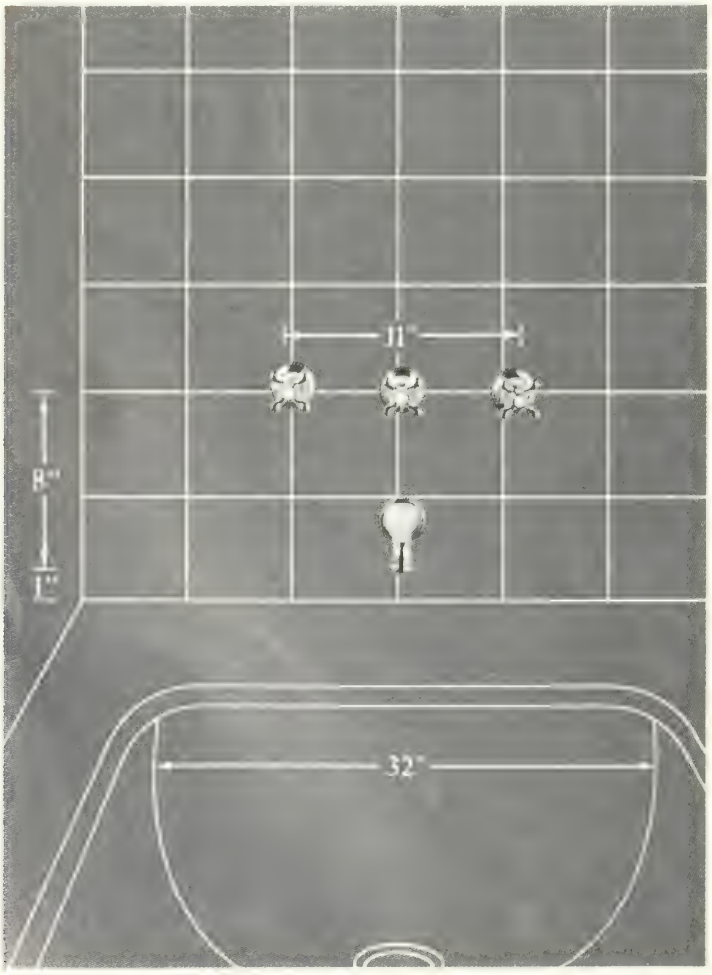
Obviously, the sultan's domestic requirements are unusual by Western standards, and even the largest palace in the world has turned out to be not big enough for the sultan's entire ménage. Plans are now under way for the construction of a so-called "mini-Istana" for the sultan's second wife, and it is to be expected that any subsequent spouses would receive similar establishments of their own as well.

Although the personal portions of the royal palace are off limits to photographers, the interiors there are anything but majestic. The sultan, seated in shirt sleeves in his black Naugahyde swivel chair in his wood-paneled study, might well be mistaken for an industrious young Singapore accountant. And although the royal family's personal servants wear traditional Malay garb, most of the palace staff tends toward T-shirts, designer jeans, and jogging shoes. This is not Windsor Castle, with punctilious flunkies in immaculate livery day and night.

For all its attempted architectural grandeur, this pomp and circumstance on the veritable edge of the Borneo jungle is in the end almost comically Graustarkian. Still, as a serious effort to deal with a serious design question, the Royal Palace of Brunei bears comparison with other earlier efforts of the same sort.

In truth, the Houses of Parliament in London, built to the designs of Sir Charles Barry and A.W.N. Pugin between 1840 and 1865, were in their time no less of a stylistic concoction than the Istana is today. Although they were meant to summon up the imagined splendor of the Age of Chivalry, the Houses of Parliament bore absolutely no resemblance to any medieval structure, and in their overall form and minute detail were resolutely Victorian (though many took the design in all seriousness as convincing archaeology; others found it to be a modern monstrosity). Today, however, it has attained the unassailable status of national icon, having become the peerless symbol of all that is English about England and its architecture. Will the same someday be true of the Royal Palace of Brunei? That certainly was the intention of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, who recently brushed aside criticism of the Istana's incredible cost with the assertion that "This palace has been built for my descendants."

In due course, the palace might well become the kind of self-fulfilling architectural prophecy that has been known to occur when a strong design is imposed on a relatively undefined setting. It is unlikely, however, that this astonishing building will be seen by future generations as a timeless work of art on a par with the great architectural achievements of Islamic civilization. Still, it will be interesting to see if Brunei eventually lives up to the startling image it has acquired along with its sultan's 1,800 rooms with river view. □



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JOURNAL



VENI VIDI VENETIA

Venice: The American View (1860–1920), Legion of Honor, San Francisco, through Jan. 20, 1985.

Whistler, Sargent, and Prendergast set the standard for American artists who rendered the beauty of Venice. Maurice Prendergast's *St. Mark's Venice (Clocktower),* circa 1898–99, *left,* stylistically flirts between Romanticism and Modernism. It embraces Carpaccio's love for color and Prendergast's own devotion to Japanese design—another Oriental influence on the Venetian Indo-European culture. This colorwash is but one blossoming of aesthetic passion for Venice in an exhibit of about 120 works. Often the panoramas of her crowning Byzantine, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque architectural jewels overlap, but one never tires of the view. *Titian Butash*

SHADOW BOXING

Manhattanites are always looking for a little space and light. Artist Susan Chorpenning was happy to oblige in her recent installation, *below,* called *549 West 52nd,* at New York's Women's Interart Center. Projecting ever-changing light patterns on the gallery walls, Chorpenning paints with light on a canvas of architectural space. *A P*





PENN ULTIMATE

Irving Penn, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, through Nov. 27

Irving Penn has facetiously been described as the last of the great Victorian photographers. Indeed, the still poses and neutral backgrounds that characterize most of his photographs lend them a directness and formal simplicity reminiscent of early studio daguerreotypes. Behind these qualities in Penn's work, however, lies not naïveté, but an acceptance, even celebration, of the artifice of the medium—an approach he prefers to what he calls "simulated naturalism." The momentary and accidental have no place in his work; his subjects exist in the timeless isolation of the studio, deliberately posed and divorced from their natural context.

Much of Penn's work over the past four decades was commissioned by *Vogue,* including the *Still Life with Food* of 1947 and the *Woman with Roses* of 1950. (The model for the latter, Lisa Fonssagrives, became Penn's wife the year this photograph was taken.)

Also chronicled in this show are Penn's portraits of the famous, his justly admired photographs of ethnographic subjects, and the startling "Street Materials" series. What unites this disparate output is Penn's remarkable vision, which brings the same classically composed elegance and cool abstraction to photographs of New Guinea tribesmen, *haute couture,* and dirty cigarette butts. *Ann Priester*

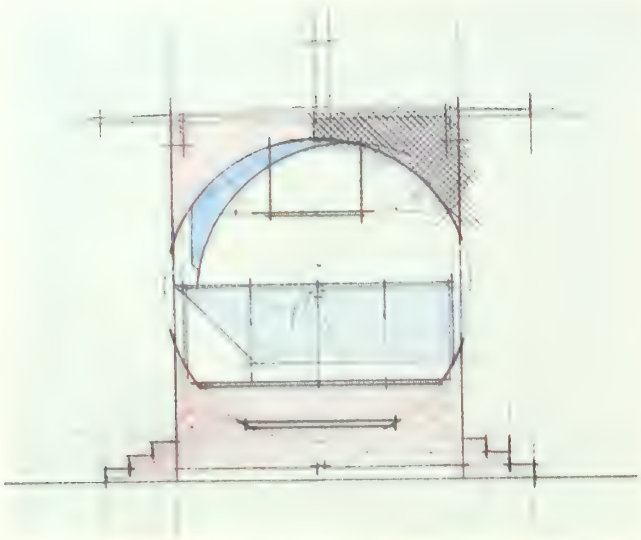


Woman with Roses, 1950. *Top: Still Life with Food,* 1947



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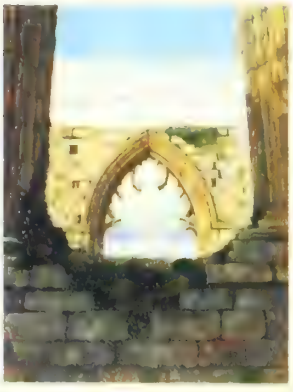
Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown: A Generation of Architecture, Arts Club of Chicago, through Nov. 3. The Art Museum, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J., Nov. 17–Jan. 12, 1985.

The new appreciation of the architectural drawing as art object has led many professionals to take up the medium in a self-conscious manner that succeeds neither as art nor idea. But here is the real thing: 154 drawings, including this 1968 sketch for the Hersey house project, *left,* by the trailblazing firm of Venturi Rauch and Scott Brown. Organized by the Krannert Art Gallery at the University of Illinois, this is an exhilarating display of the architectural design process at its most visually febrile and conceptually fertile. A superb catalogue designed by Raymond Perlman illuminates VR&SB's historic contributions. *Martin Filler*

BARE RUIN'D CHOIRS

A Landscape Explored: Wharfedale at Bolton Abbey. Francis Kyle Gallery, New York, through Oct. 7.

The search for the romantic and the picturesque that



sent British tourists abroad in the eighteenth century eventually focused on England itself, and by the turn of the century Wharfedale had been "discovered" by artists such as Girtin and Turner, as well as the poet Wordsworth, who recommended to "all lovers of beautiful scenery, Bolton Abbey and its neighborhood."

Countless easels have since been set up on this three-mile stretch of Yorkshire dale. "A Landscape Explored" is thus as much a tribute to the place as to the tradition of British landscape painting. Organized by Lord Hartington, whose father, the Duke of Devonshire, owns this part of Wharfedale and the ruins of Bolton Abbey, and Francis Kyle, a London gallery owner, the exhibition contains the work of nine contemporary artists who set out to interpret anew a landscape already familiar in art if not in life.

The results include photographs, oils, watercolors, poems, and etchings by Liz Butler, Jack Chesterman, Howard Eaglestone, Ian Gardner, Andrew Griffiths, Simon Harling, Grahame Jones, Gerald Mynott, and Graeme Willson, whose *Nave, Bolton Priory,* is shown, *left.* A charming companion guide is available in limited edition.

Amy McNeish



SITTING PRESIDENT

Joseph Polinski's unthronely *Reagan Chair,* 1983, *left,* is true-blue political expression from the tip of Mr. President's allegedly Grecian Formuloid head to the toes of his spur-spangled cowboy boots. This painted wood construction is part of "Beyo Tradition: Eleven Contemporary Folk Artists a show of about 40 paintin and sculptures at The Katonah Gallery, Katonah, N.Y., Oct. 28–Dec. 30.



TIME-TESTED RECIPES

Fifteen hundred gastronomy books go under the gavel at Sotheby's, New York, on October 9 and 10. From a Renaissance book by Mesisburgo (one of its woodcuts, *left*) to an early manuscript on vegetarianism to Carême and Escoffier, the auction offers slices of life from five centuries.


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Doors, floors, even the lavish bathrooms were made not by conventional craftsmen but by artists Freidus has come to know

(Continued from page 208) At first, Freidus bought photographs one or two at a time, but frustration soon set in as he came to feel that this approach to collecting had no guiding philosophy. "Just seeing a photo on a wall, alone, made no sense. The process [of assembling a distinctive body of objects] seemed endless, shapeless. Without establishing some boundaries, you could never say your goal had been reached."

So Freidus began to gather his pictures in groups, buying a particular photographer's work in depth, usually conforming to some established body of images—a book, for example. All 83 prints of the first edition of Robert Frank's landmark text *The Americans* are in the Freidus collection, one of only a few sets known to be complete. (Another, with two more prints Frank added later, is in The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.) He also has all 213 of Lee Friedlander's monument series and is now assembling Brassai's *Secret Paris,* totaling 124 pictures when complete. Freidus mats each photograph and then binds them in specially made books that permit perusal of the real images as easily as a printed text might be read. "I think of each group of pictures as one piece of work. Together the photos read as a single narrative, which is, I feel, the great achievement of contemporary American photography. Its greatest practitioners, like Walker Evans or Robert Frank, were able to describe the atmosphere of a city or town, to capture a sense of place."

Freidus is not such a purist about his personal philosophy that he is unwilling to break a set up in order to display work in his loft. In fact, it is a point of pride for him that by clustering pictures photography is more successful decoratively, not eclipsed by furniture or painting and sculpture.

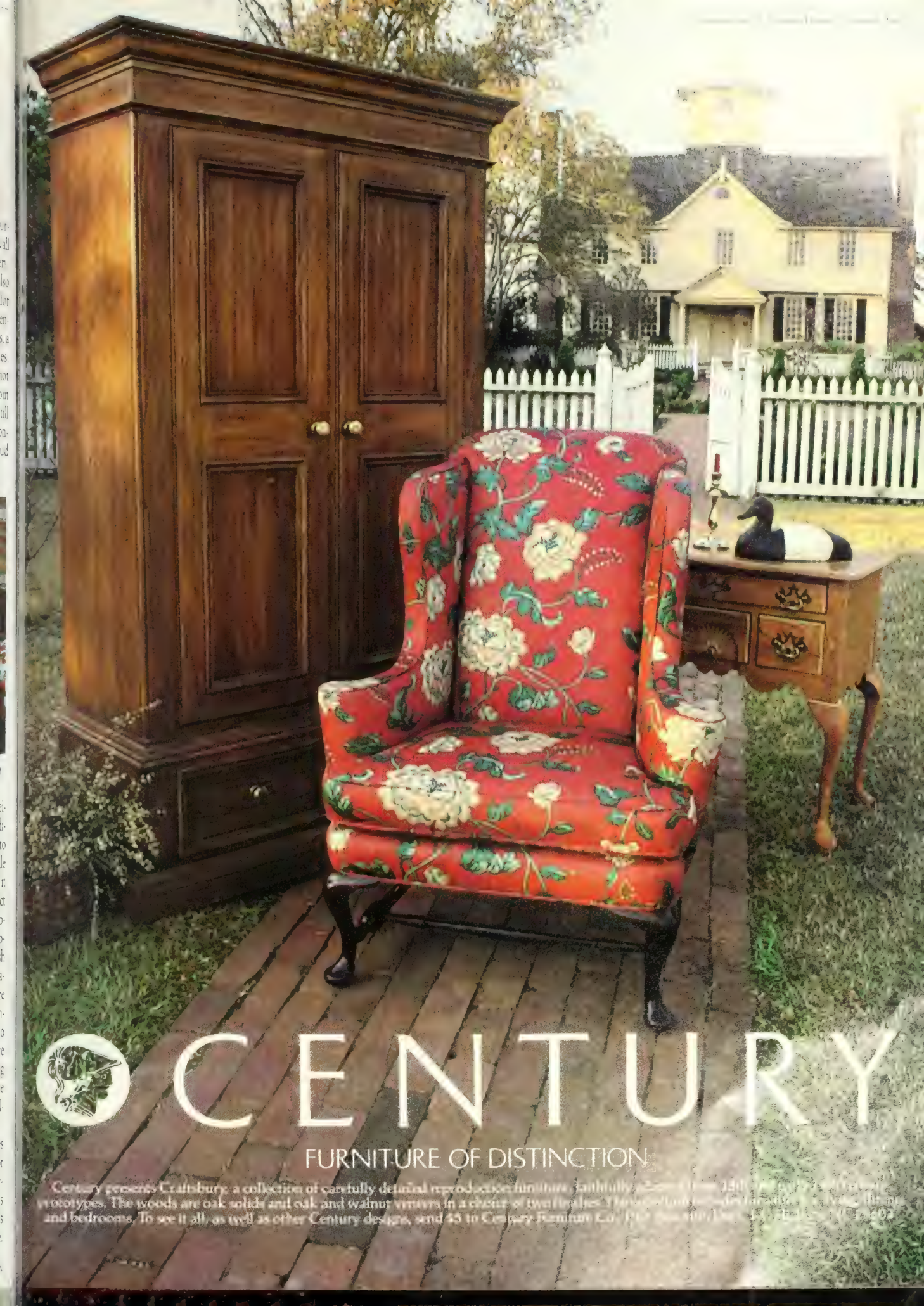
Over the years, Freidus's ambitions for his gallery and his collection have grown. Taking a partner, Al Ordover, he opened a new, larger, more prominently located SoHo gallery and increased his involvement with painters. In addition to making special purchases for himself—the Judy Pfaff wall piece was bought from another gallery, not through his business—Freidus also began giving commissions to artists for particular areas in his loft, now an entirely residential space. Doors, floors, a chest to hold his photographic series, even the lavish bathrooms were not made by conventional craftsmen, but by artists he has come to know. "I still want someone to do the air-conditioning duct," remarks the house-proud owner.



Robert Freidus in his New York SoHo loft.

Despite the fact that many of Freidus's pieces could be considered radical, there appears to be a consistency to his taste, a shape to his vision. While this unifying strain is hard to define, it is nonetheless perceptible in the fact that this unlikely combination of objects—photography, painting, sculpture, mannequins in costumes, English antiques, colorful abstract installations, Art Deco ceramics and furniture ("the last time furniture was both comfortable and beautiful," according to Freidus)—no single piece jars the eye in an unpleasant way. The sprawling space is exciting, active, but enjoyable and easy for all its lack of conventionality.

As a visitor departs, Freidus pauses by an ersatz piano, the work of sculptor Richard Artschwager. This plastic-laminate and horsehair object was Freidus's first major acquisition. "This piece is a real litmus test for people.


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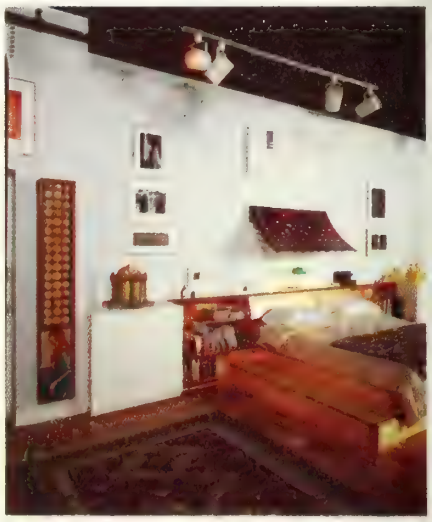
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They just don't know how to deal with it. It's not a piano, so then what is it? Reality and unreality—that's what so much of it is. Doors that aren't doors, floors not actually floors. I love it. I don't worry about what anybody thinks. They ask, 'What do you do with them?' As if I needed a reason to have them!"



Hanging like a tiny canopy over the bed in Freidus's loft is a painted wood construction by Stephen McKeown.

There is a happy postscript to this story. Freidus did indeed meet someone through his interest in art. Last summer he married Ellie Packer, a British curator he encountered in connection with an exhibition of Scottish paintings held at his gallery. Ms. Packer isn't sure she likes all the art in her husband's loft, but that's all right. Freidus wants to start acquiring a few pieces for a country house. □ *Editor: Babs Simpson*

GARDEN MADNESS

(Continued from page 151) linoleum and demolished a shacklike fifties addition (later replaced with the experimental courtyard). From the start, both Thomas and Hodgins knew the interiors had to be neutral. Thomas says, "I'm thinking about color all the time, so I've got to have a neutral background. I can't take any more busyness going on than what's already in my head."

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are now the main purposes of the property since in the middle of the project Tori fell in love, got married, and set up a second residence in Middleburg, a half-hour away), the most important part of the renovation was the replacing of the fifties addition with the changeable outdoor room for Thomas's smaller garden experiments. It has a wall of sliding panels to represent different window and wall configurations. Its grass floor can be covered with other materials, such as gravel or sand, for garden-sculpture projects, and it can be channelized for some water-garden projects she has in mind.

"I'm thinking about color all the time, so I've got to have a neutral background. I can't take any more busyness going on than what's already in my head"

But first she will be working on the computerized hillside—"a wild-flower mixture that's programed to stay within its color selection so you always have a yellow band, a white band, and a blue band." Then will come the cutting garden of glass flowers and a project she calls Dancing Trees, both of which she will describe no further. "This is an event space," Thomas concludes. "I want to use it to delight people. It's a place to demonstrate strange landscapes that there's really not a market for yet. But to delight people, that seems pretty basic to me." □

Editor: Kaaren Parker Gray

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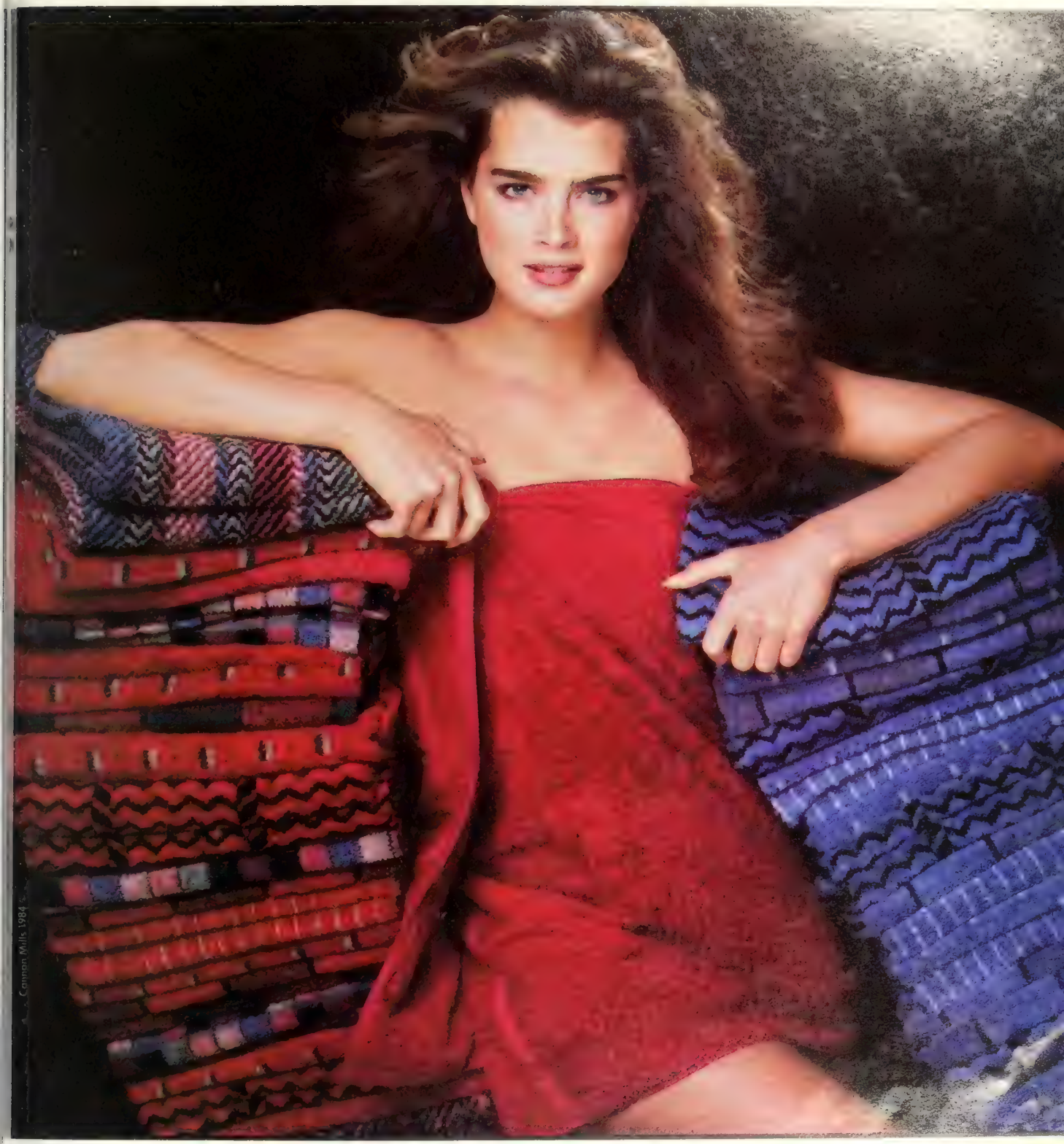
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GOOD BREEDING

After a wild start in Asia Minor, the modern iris settled down tame and colorful

By Henry Mitchell

The greatest of garden pleasures is, of course, the iris; chiefly because it is the showiest of all garden flowers and any nitwit can grow it provided there is sun and good drainage. I, alas, no longer grow it well, either because I have entered the sub-nitwit class or because the greatest of all floral beasts refuses my heavy damp acid garden. Oh, I still grow a few. But what you want is a grand sunny enclosure with clematis-tangled cedars and dame's violets and a fine big mirror of a pool with scarlet fishes and lily pads, and a sea of irises: the tall bearded ones. In the fifty-odd years I have loved this flower, I have loved others, too, but never been unfaithful in any real sense. One is supposed to have in the brain a colored picture that one can conjure up at times when all seems worthless and lost, and it is safe to say that more people probably have the iris there—usually a sky-blue one—in that safe recess where no moth can corrupt, as it were, than any other flower. What other image could there be?

You must know that every year hundreds or thousands of new garden varieties of iris come forth from the seedling patches of the Western world and each of these strikes its breeder as a flower of infinite charm, though nobody else may see anything unusual in the production. What is not generally known is that the Iris Season, a phrase always uttered in capital letters by iris growers, is much the same as far as the pitch of excitement goes, generation after generation; so that while it is true that today's irises are far brighter, better shaped, and more substantial than those of the past, still the gardener's excitement when they bloom is identical with the grand excitements of, say, 1927.

At that time, there were no good whites, no good yellows, and the pinks were at best rosy lilac and the blues were, at best, overcast lavender. The reds were on the muddy side and were only a little redder than brown on the one hand and purple on the other. There were stratagems, however, in those days. Yellow was the worst gap. We planted kerrias and yellow pansies and roses and the earliest day lilies and hoped for the best and, if I may say so, achieved it. Nowadays, however, one can settle for the very cheapest of irises in any good catalogue and acquire irises in every iris color, every one of which would have made the iris grower of the late twenties faint with disbelief.

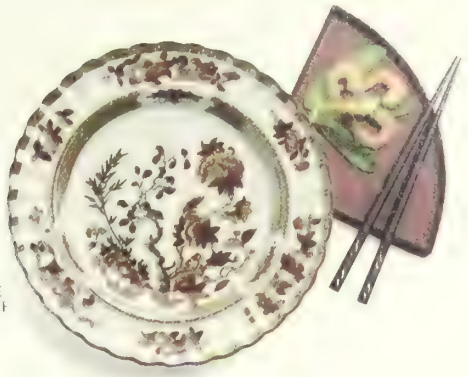


The deeply ruffled, tall, bearded white 'Ermine Robe'

PAMELA HARPER

The first thing the right-thinking gardener learns is the importance of yellow in an iris garden. All the other colors are welcome but all the others are merely pleasant faces, as you might say, until you introduce the yellows (at least 25 percent of the irises should be yellow in various tints), at which point the other colors come alive in a way you cannot believe until you try it. It must have been about 1931 that we got our first great yellow, a chest-high creature with lots of flowers on the extremely well-branched stem, called 'Alta California'. I was a kid then. Dr. Mann, a physician up the street, was a billionaire (or so I assumed for some years) who did spectacular things, such as writing a check for 25 quite hard

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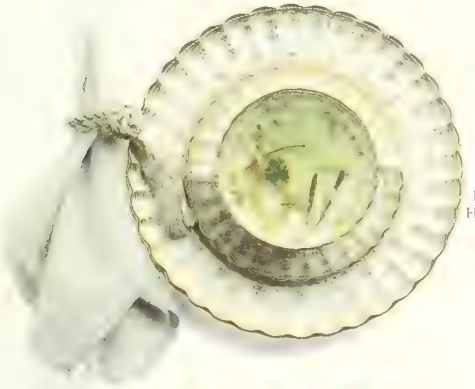
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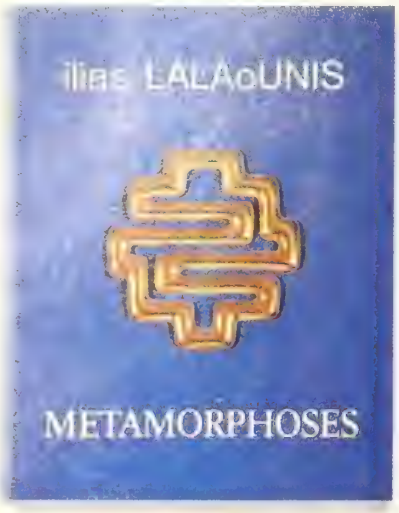


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dollars to acquire a new iris. He had imported, at incredible expense, irises from England and France. The names of Millet, Cayeux, Pilkington, Bliss, Vilmorin, Dennis, Foster, Dykes mean little to the current generation of iris gardeners, but they were everything at that time. And then, suddenly, the first great yellow (as far as our crowd was concerned, though there was a somewhat rattier yellow, 'W.R. Dykes'; a tremendous name for a less than tremendous flower) came from Mohr-Mitchell in California. I have to say that I liked being in at the start of the Great Age of irises. The great white, 'Purissima', came out in 1927. Before then, there was no good garden white, not one. And now this amazing yellow.

When I look back, I see easily that all our present riches stem from the merest handful of wild irises, chiefly *I. mesopotamica* from the eastern Mediterranean, *I. pallida* and *I. variegata* from Europe. The European wild irises are diploids; the great mesopotamica is a tetraploid. When they were intercrossed, you usually got sterile triploids, but if you kept at it long enough you could move all the genes of the European irises into the lavender tetraploids of Asia, and with twice as many chromosomes to play with, the new variations seemed (and still seem) endless. The modern gardener rarely reflects on the fact that the greatest progenitors of the iris are the wild species, especially the ones from Asia Minor.

In their day, they were not always much honored. There are some classic cases, such as 'Conquistador', which one great breeder of the time (though not the breeder of this iris, who was S.B. Mitchell of California) called "yus another lavender," since he was not very good at pronouncing the letter *J*. It was not just another lavender. Bred from it was 'Purissima' itself. There is scarcely a white or blue iris in any garden in the Western world now that does not spring from 'Conquistador', to say nothing of the endless irises of every color imaginable that include it in their ancestry. I don't think it ever won an award, though most recent Dykes medalists (the highest of iris awards) ultimately derive from it. There were problems. The great white 'Purissima', which produced 'Snow



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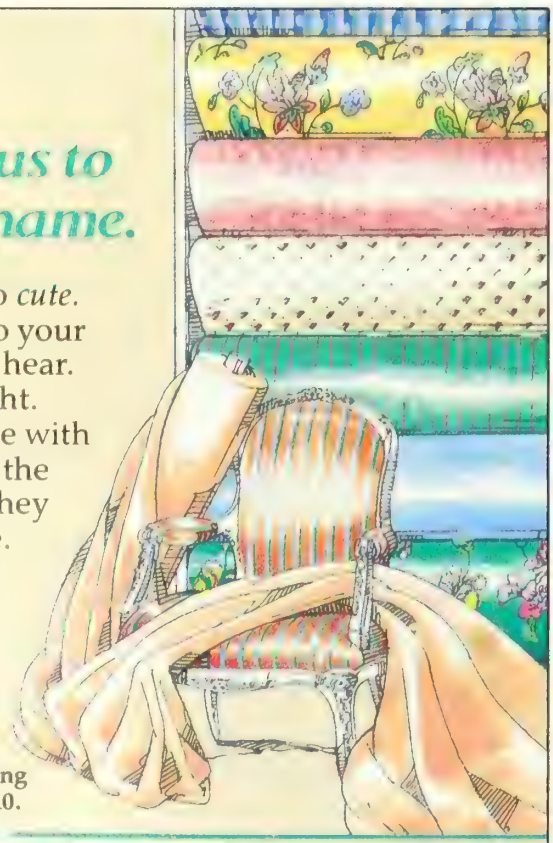
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GARDEN PLEASURES

Flurry' (which produced everything else), was tender to cold, having huge doses of *I. mesopotamica* blood in it on both sides of its ancestry. This did not bother us in the Tennessee-Mississippi border country, but it may have discouraged gardeners of harsher climates when it froze and rotted every winter. It was only when more and more genes from the hardier European species were bred into the mix that descendants of these great irises became reliable glories of northern gardens.

When these old irises bloomed, the iris gardeners of the day went fairly mad, avoiding their offices and their most solemn duties

'Argentina' was an early important white, mother of 'Purissima', though promptly eclipsed by her daughter. Still, there are important irises that descend from 'Argentina' that do not descend from 'Purissima'. Every iris that springs from 'Snow Flurry' (by common consent deemed the greatest parent of modern irises) also springs from 'Argentina' and 'Conquistador' and 'Purissima', and you sometimes wonder why the intermediate ancestor gets all the praise and not the ultimate ancestor; but no doubt it's the same reason we boast about the pedigree of Jefferson and Marshall rather than of the first slime of the prehistoric sea.

When these old irises bloomed, the iris gardeners of the day went fairly mad, avoiding their offices, their surgeries, their most solemn duties. They were out among their flowers; you could always find them in their gardens unless, very briefly, they had dashed at breakneck speed to another iris fancier's garden where (depending on what was blooming in that fellow's garden) they fell either into envy or contempt. It is still the same today, though I believe that with the years the iris gardener has been somewhat harnessed or



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housebroken and does not now invent so many lies as formerly to avoid normal human obligations during iris season. Decades after 'Purissima', one of the well-known national figures of the iris world was in my garden and headed straight for that old beauty of 1927. "What's that?" he said. "That is a remarkable flower." He was chagrined to discover it was the outmoded ancestor of most of the irises he knew in his own garden. But then I confess I grew 'Purissima' extremely well, the flower stalk 62 inches tall, the blooms (as it happened that day) unsullied by rain, unslashed by wind and unwilted by sun.

The first Dykes medal went to 'San Francisco', a white stitched with blue, derived from 'Purissima', and like it, sensitive to cold. The better seedling of the cross was 'Los Angeles', but judges of the day (judges nowadays do not make errors, of course) honored the wrong iris. I had both of them, with their great parent, and it was entertaining to notice how often people sailed over to them in the garden, even long after they were superseded as garden varieties.

It must have been about the time of the First World War that 'Aphrodite' appeared. This was a pink. It was as pink as a warm-lilac sweet pea. It had a stem 48 inches high, and when its grower, the great W.R. Dykes, saw it rising above a patch of blue-lavender seedlings of *Iris pallida* type, he promptly named it for the goddess. And he was right. Grown with the blue-lilac irises of that day it was startlingly pink. For years and years it was used as a breeder in an effort to get even pinker irises, but those who used it were on the wrong track. Pink irises came from a totally different and utterly unexpected direction. Not that there is time here to wander off into the pinks, beyond saying that in the forties everybody (all iris fanatics) saw pink where nobody else did. And ultimately produced it, too. Anybody can cross two beautiful irises of the same color and count on getting quite nice irises, not necessarily as nice as the parents, but very pretty all the same.

The reason Paul Cook's name was preeminent among iris gardeners of the best sort (such as our group in Tennessee, though Mr. Cook was a Yankee) was that he did difficult things. Sometimes he introduced wild species into his breeding lines, which meant an immediate setback in form and color. Garden irises, after generations of careful breeding and selection (and the destruction of literally millions of seedlings because they were not advances on existing varieties when they bloomed) had fine flower shape and color. The top three petals, the standards, were firm and domed, not flimsy and flopping. The lower three petals, the falls, were firm and flared, instead of limp and hanging down like a basset hound's ears. The colors had been purified and brightened. The hafts (the base of the fall petals) had been cleaned up of distracting brown veins

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that marred the effect of the earliest garden irises.

So when Cook introduced wild blood into this already-elegant family of garden irises, the results for the first few generations were hideous. Colors were muddy again, the hafts were messy, the stems were short. But his aim was not to produce a field of lovely children from lovely parents, but to produce, eventually, a strain of irises in colors and patterns never seen before, and he succeeded in such a variety as 'Whole Cloth'. He also succeeded in



'River Hawk' and 'Mystique' are two of the best-known bi-tones in these shades.

producing the first truly great deep blue (we called it navy, and it was that, sort of) named 'Allegiance'. We amateurs produced pretty irises by crossing pretty irises together. He, and other great breeders, produced very great irises, very great advances on anything existing at the time, by breeding ugly irises, enduring years of ugly flowers until at the last, by the wonderful segregation of the genes that was sure to come if only the breeder had skill and patience enough, the gorgeous combinations finally expressed themselves in flowers that were startling improvements over what we had.

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ments of the past. The great 'Snow Flurry' is the classic example. It is, in essence, a cross of the Asian mesopotamica with the European pallida, but derives more immediately from 'Argentina', 'Conquistador', and 'Purissima'. The breeder, a woman of great charm and a great lover of the iris, made an utterly improbable cross that was almost sure to fail, and she did it not knowing very much about what she was doing. Two seeds were produced in the pod (instead of the expected sixty) and one of them was shriveled. It seemed almost pointless to plant the one seed that looked all right, since you really like to grow several hundred seeds of any particular cross to give yourself a chance for the genes to segregate in beautiful ways. She planted it. It grew, it bloomed, and was a sensation. Like 'Purissima', it was white, but it was also ruffled. Something new. And, while tender in bitter winters, it was still a great deal hardier than 'Purissima'. And the greatest thing about it was that you could put the pollen of almost any iris on it and expect seedlings that would be advances over existing varieties.

In the breeding of 'Snow Flurry' nothing had been added to the long-existing genes already present in the garden irises of the day. But the segregation of the existing common genes was one of sensational beauty. All this beauty had existed from the beginning in the wild irises of Asia and Europe, but only when bred for generations, weeding out, did the flower appear that, so it seemed to us then, had dropped from heaven. One of its parents had twice as many chromosomes as the other, and you would expect a sterile triploid. It was mere accident that the diploid chromosomes failed to divide, so they matched the chromosomes of the tetraploid parent and a fertile (as rabbits are fertile) flower resulted to establish a new dynasty of garden flowers.

I myself, if I could, would like a garden of some of the sensations of past springs. Maybe 'Blue Velvet', which had the velvety look derived from 'Dominion', an immensely important iris



Bearded 'Arctic Dawn', first listed in 1968.

that first brought velvety texture to iris falls. 'Sierra Blue', 'Cahokia', 'Blue Rhythm', 'Distance', 'South Pacific' are some of the thirty-odd blues I'd like to see every spring. I think I could be satisfied with as few as two hundred of the old discarded kinds, among them the cream and pastel lacquered 'Starshine', the full-yellow 'Foxfire', and dark purple 'Indiana Night'.

It would be perverse of the modern gardener to grow these superseded varieties in preference to current sorts. But I now understand something that was a mystery to me for years. I mentioned 'San Francisco', which came out in 1927. Old Dr. Nash, one of my boyhood garden heroes, raised a seedling of it he called 'Edith'. The flower was enormous, but somewhat floppy and the stem had to be tied to a cane or it went down in the first wind. It had a place of honor in his garden and every spring there it was, leaning every which way with flowers like cantaloupes stuck out at interesting angles. It looked sad, indeed, compared with the irises of his main planting (and those irises, too, would look sad compared to current varieties). I never could see how he grew such a weak flower when literally thousands of far better irises were his for the asking. Now I know why he kept 'Edith' and the other sad old irises. He remembered the first year they bloomed for him. They were not sad then. They were glorious, the best to be seen. Just as one might have an old hound, somewhat weak in the kidneys and, moreover, demanding to be lugged up and down stairs—worthless, compared to new hounds bright in the field and playful in the paw. But you'd keep the mutt till God (as you might say) called her to Abraham's bosom, and quite an armful she would be, too. In gardens and kennels there is no law that says everything has to be in its prime. We do not live, after all, in the earth's first morning, and we trot through life trailing clouds no longer new.

After the years of loving the iris, I see I know little worth telling anybody new to the prince of flowers, except to have plenty of yellow, to be very stingy with brown and red irises (they make everything look heavy and dull). And do not underestimate the importance of colors you may not like at first, such as milky magenta, and watch out for whites: too many of them give a startled and restless look to the planting. Go heavy on light yellows and light blues, and when in doubt go for clear solid pastels, avoiding irises with several colors blended on a single flower and dark colors except as accents. A planting of just yellows and blues will look poor, not gorgeous as you might think (I tried it, though warned at the time by an experienced gardener), and force yourself to plant the lavenders and lilacs even if you think you dislike those colors. Without them the other colors either look garish or fail to sparkle properly. Get the cheapest, in the colors you like. The cheapest now on the market are infinitely more beautiful than any of the old ones I have mentioned, even if we paid the equivalent of $250 for a root of them once. When they bloom, in May–June in most of America, you will feel precisely—no more and no less— what gardeners felt in the twenties and thirties and, if it comes to that, from Eden on. □

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November 1984

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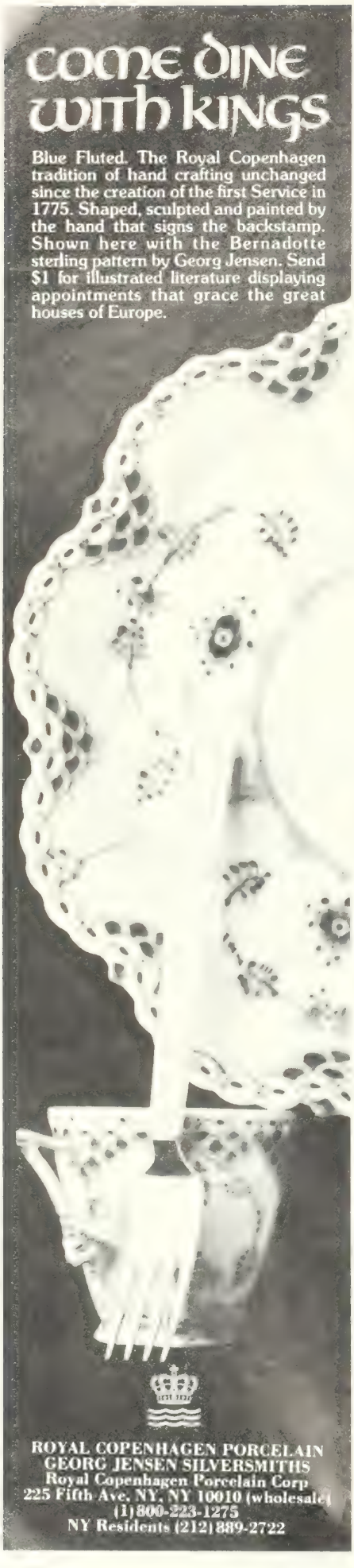


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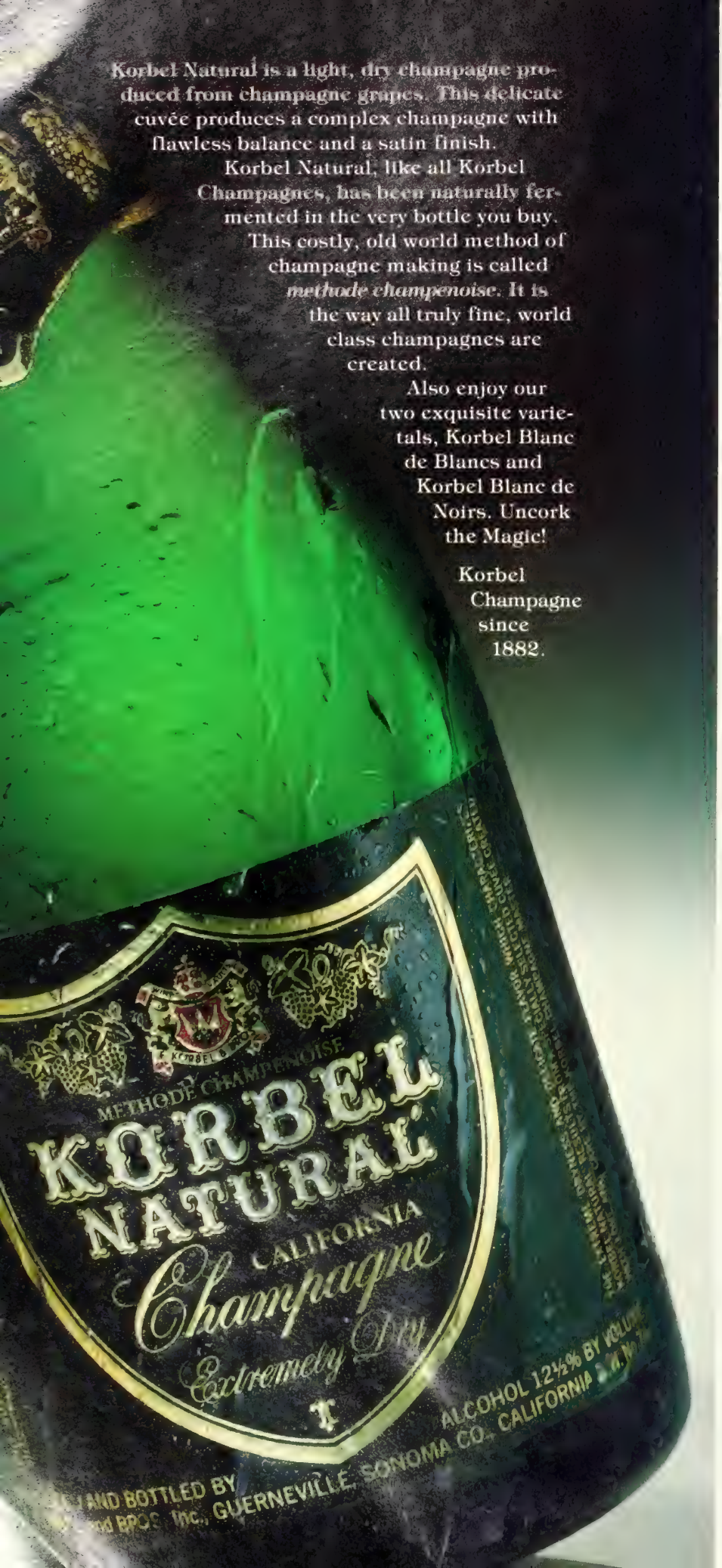


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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

Alexander Cockburn's review of this season's new photography books, page 28, reminds us of T. S. Eliot's thoughts on the way works of art speak to each other across time. As we choose our material for each issue, we have in mind that House & Garden will be a record of civilization in our time, and we want that record to reflect the full range of decoration and design, art and architecture in the eighties.

Of course, this invariably leads us into the thorny question of taste. Perhaps that is why I so enjoy the quote from Ralph Caplan's book, *By Design,* which says: "I can always tell when someone's taste is improving: it moves closer to my own." Caplan maintains that the public does not resist the superior but does reject the thoroughly unfamiliar. Still, we see at least part of our job as selecting out the superior even when it is unfamiliar, so that more that is superior will become familiar to us all.

The superior was all around us as we toured the current Museum of Modern Art show, "Alvar Aalto: Furniture and Glass," covered in this month's Design column, page 68. Linoleum-topped birch tables and stools like the ones in the show were in my first apartment in New York, and they've served my family well to this day, moving from living room to kitchen to study as our life and circumstances have changed. Wherever they are placed, they look as handsome and right as they did when they were bought at Bonniers twenty years ago.

To see another side of design, anyone who can should take up Nancy Richardson's invitation to visit the newly restored and recently reopened Rockefeller rooms on the fifth floor of the Museum of the City of New York. Nancy's invitation is in a new House & Garden column beginning on page 19. Launched with our September issue, All About Style will keep readers posted on what's new, what's in, and what's happening.

It was Nancy who took me to visit Aileen Mehle, which led to our story on how "Suzy" lives and works. I had heard about the cases of champagne hiding under the skirts of the tables in her New York duplex, but I didn't have any that afternoon as Aileen entertained us with the stories behind the stories in her daily column on society.



Alvar Aalto's classic free-form glass vase

When you are with Suzy there are bubbles enough without the champagne.

In New York on a break from weeks of shooting for the fall run of *Dallas,* Larry and Maj Hagman stopped by to see our photographs of their house, page 182. While they were here, House & Garden writer Gabrielle Winkel had lunch with them at "21" and discovered some of the differences between Larry Hagman and J.R. Ewing, particularly the life he shares with his Swedish-born designer wife, Maj, on the beach in Malibu.

Another visitor to New York recently was the Paris journalist Christina de Liagre, a frequent contributor to our pages. It turns out that she knew firsthand just what a miracle it is to find an apartment in the Place des Vosges, for Christina lives above the Noble Spaces in this issue, page 118. Working with photographer David Massey on the shoot was House & Garden's new European Creative Director, Marie-Paule Pellé.

Marina Schinz's spectacular portfolio of photographs of the Desert Garden at the Huntington in California is further proof that you don't have to be fashionable to be beautiful. As a transplanted Midwesterner, I have always found the unfashionable cacti some of nature's most extraordinary plants. For a very special look at the splendor of cactus, see page 162.

The once-empty acres around our house in Quogue are filling up with new houses, so we have instituted a new fall tradition—putting in a few trees here and there to protect a view or provide a bit of screening for outdoor living on the decks around the house. No wonder, then, that I read with more than an editor's interest Anthony Huxley's piece on Trees for Small Kingdoms, page 42. But it was the editor in me that delighted in discovering a new word: the "fastigiate" or narrow-erect trees that Huxley suggests for limited spaces. I can't wait for our next round of tree shopping so that I can ask garden-center merchants what they have in the way of "fastigiates" this year. If they take me straight to their "narrow erect" varieties, I'll know they read House & Garden, too.

Lou Gropp

Editor-in-Chief



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ALL ABOUT STYLE

By Nancy Richardson



Rockefeller dressing room in the 1880s.

■ ROCKEFELLER ROOMS In 1937, when The Museum of Modern Art needed the space for its sculpture garden, the house that was in the way had belonged to John D. Rockefeller Sr. This house represented the aesthetic antithesis of what was later to go up in its place. What is amazing —in that it must have been embarrassing in the late thirties to make a case for fashionable anything in the 1880s let alone *decoration*—was that John D. Rockefeller Jr. had the instinct to preserve two rooms of his father's house, and the Museum of the City of New York had the sense to accept them. Thanks to the Rockefellers, these splendid rooms, done in the 1880s by George A. Schastey, have been recently restored and reopened to the public on the museum's fifth floor. A "Japanese" bedroom and an American Renaissance dressing room—think what the word Japanese came to mean when applied to MOMA's garden—are at once garish, rectilinear, functional, and like a stage set. Anyone having wood paneling stenciled should have a look at the dressing room. ■ ANCIENT TABLEWARE In some departments, the Metropolitan Museum is like an iceberg. The collections on display represent a fraction of the museum's holdings. No wonder then that the museum's director, Philippe de Montebello, is especially proud of a new permanent installation of ancient Greek and Roman silver—both domestic and ceremonial—that has just been completed in the shadow of the museum's great staircase. This Greek and Roman treasury is the special achievement of Dr. Dietrich von Bothmer, chairman of the department of Greek and Roman art, who is a contemporary legend in his field. A tiny but important part of the collection is from a nineteenth-century bequest but the great part has been acquired since the sixties under Dr. von Bothmer. The shapes of the winebowls, pitchers, goblets, beakers, flacons, strainers, and other utensils as well as the ancient names —*situla, kylix, oinochoe, skyphos, alabastron, phiale*—form the stylistic basis for more than two thousand years of design since. A bride could do no better than to start here before choosing her patterns. The collection is cleanly and rhythmically displayed. Wait until you see the Roman spoons "swimming" on a slanting scrim like a school of minnows. ■ FABRICS AND PATINA White-background chintzes have been an established American taste since Billy Baldwin made them popular in the sixties. Even then, as Baldwin and others were establishing the taste for clear, clean colors, there was a group of women in both England and America who systematically soaked materials with bright white backgrounds in tea to mellow and "age" the colors. This tea-stained



Rockefeller bedroom, originally on West 54th Street.





Elaborate handle for a second-century A.D. Roman silver dish.

Sixth-century B.C. Greek pitcher.



PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ROCKEFELLER ROOMS FROM THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM; ROMAN HANDLE AND GREEK PITCHER FROM THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART





Bennison "Roses" fabric

look is now catching on officially with a number of beautiful chintzes that have been deliberately designed to look old. Geoffrey Bennison, 91 Pimlico Road, London SW1, has taken a richly textured cotton-linen of a heavy beautiful quality and had it printed with huge softly colored roses from an eighteenth-century design. Bennison has used it for Marie-Hélène de Rothschild's bedroom in New York. Vincent Fourcade used another coloring for Nancy Kissinger's new house in the country. John Stefanidis has a fabric in the same spirit, Bokhara. At Brunschwig, ask for a material called Kandahar Print. ■ HORST'S WORLD Not a journalist, a realist, or a recorder of any vernacular but the most attractive, Horst has been *the* photographer of our era who caught the mood and gesture of fashionable life. What he saw in the camera has influenced not just fashion and photography but decoration itself. On view at the International Center of Photography in New York until November 4 is an exhibition of Horst's fashion photographs, two of which we show here. They date from his life in Paris in the thirties. A reputation as a photographer of interiors developed in the sixties in New York when for *Vogue* and Diana Vreeland he and Valentine Lawford traveled the world. The centerpiece of these stories was often a beautiful woman shown barefoot and—in some of the best shots—with stylishly messy hair. He applied the same off-handed view to houses, specializing in photographs of front halls with stone floors and massive architectural tables on which armfuls of flowers had been plunked en route to a flower-room to be arranged. He liked living rooms that had been turned into studios, bedrooms that were libraries, unplumped down cushions. He often added something red—a leather book, a flower, a towel—to pick a room up. Few people, let alone few photographers, have had the ability to use flowers that had almost had it in such a poignant way. Women would leave a room just as it was after Horst had composed his photographs because his arrangement of chairs, cushions, objects gave an atmosphere of ease and assurance that no amount of matched-up decoration could.



Gloria Vanderbilt by Horst, 1940s.

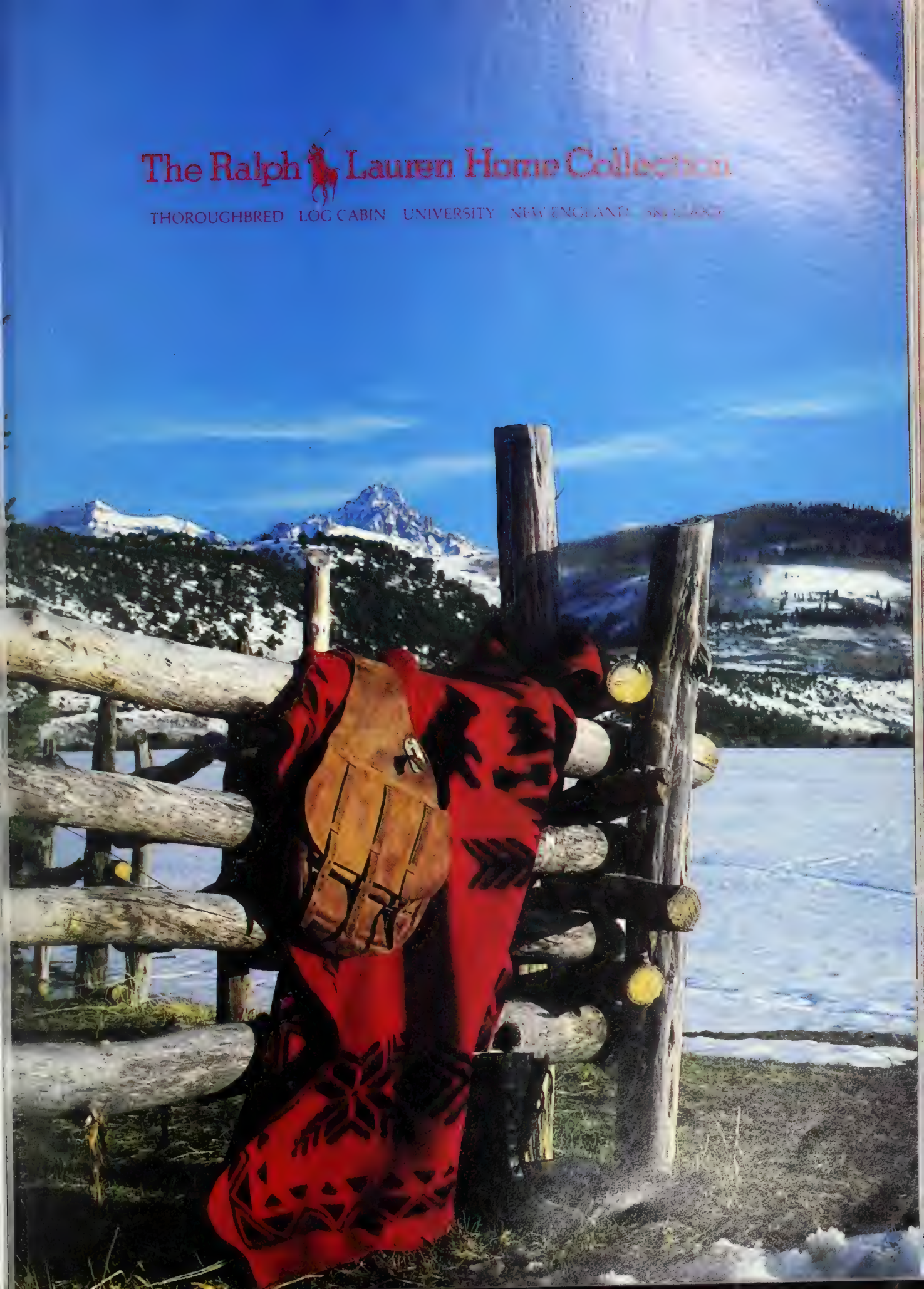


Corset, 1939 fashion photograph by Horst.



Red hot piano

■ LACQUER RED BABY The piano as we know it was developed in the mid nineteenth century, and its enormous non-musical case was always regarded—as were clock cases and book bindings—as something to go to town on as an element of decoration. Alma-Tadema decorated a grand piano for Henry Gurdon Marquand in the 1880s; about the same time a piano that looked like an ormolu-encrusted commode was being made for the Whitneys. Syrie Maugham did pianos in a pickled white, and let's just not list what happened to the


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piano in Hollywood production numbers. But who recently has had an easy time of incorporating a big black piano into the arrangement of a room? Why not find an old baby grand and lacquer it red as Vince Latucca did for the Cenzo room at the Southampton Designer Show House last summer? Craftsman Kalman Detrich—tel. (212) 245-1234—did the actual work. ■ LOOK IT UP Since 1977 when John Fleming and Hugh Honour's *Dictionary of the Decorative Arts* (Harper & Row) appeared in America it has become a one-book course in how to show off at dinner. You could start off with Alvar Aalto, progress through Robert Adam, skip down to a delicious bit on Alençon lace, wallow happily in an explanation of a monkey orchestra of *Affenkapelle* before going to sleep at night. Funny thing was that the information stuck in memory as vividly as gossip you wished you hadn't heard, and indeed, it could be redelivered at the proper moment as if it were gossip. Englishmen who write dictionaries have the same sense of commitment as a novelist, and their readers look forward to new reference books as if they were the latest episode from Anthony Powell. You can imagine the excitement then when this year Simon Jervis, deputy keeper of furniture and woodwork at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, produced a new *Dictionary of Design and Designers* (Penguin, London; Facts on File, New York), which while using the pet modernist term *design* in the title really serves anything but a modernist purpose. The Victoria & Albert has the most comprehensive collections in the world of four hundred years of the decorative arts, and Simon Jervis has very wide-ranging tastes. Realizing that twentieth-century reference books often reflect modernist likes—plain surfaces and geometric forms—and dislikes—anything thought to be mere surface decoration—Jervis set out to have a fresh look at out-of-favor talent wherever he found it. In fact he seeks to broaden the term designer to include artists such as Raphael, Rubens, and Simon Vouet, who all worked on tapestries. Though he does not cover the American scene adequately, Jervis finally offers us passionate entries on major and minor nineteenth-century European talent from Alma-Tadema to Viollet-le-Duc and does justice to some non-modernist twentieth-century figures like John Fowler and Syrie Maugham. ■ FORGOTTEN TEXTILES Nineteenth-century tapestries, rugs, portières, and needlework were as important to the appearance of nineteenth-century interiors as verdure, commedia dell'arte, chinoiserie, and Boucher-designed tapestries and upholstery made in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were to those earlier settings. Today we know exactly what an eighteenth-century Aubusson looks like and how it ought to be used. But nineteenth-century textiles done either at factories like Aubusson, Beauvais, and Gobelins or by a wide range of amateurs remain as exotic and little understood as a home computer to a nonagenarian. Because of the richness these textiles add to a room, certain dealers are fast figuring out how they were initially used and how they fit with nineteenth-century furniture being bought today. A good example from Juan Portela, *above,* is a crewel rug in a nonnarrative design that was made in India for the English market, probably put on the floor a few months a year, then rolled up and stored as the seasons changed. It has a black background with the design in a range of pale colors from beige to mustard, and it looks especially well on top of a wall-to-wall sisal carpet. Smaller needlework rugs look as well on the wall as they do on the floor. Portela cautions against using too many small rugs in one room and warns that even though nineteenth-century rooms were known for their eclecticism, all textiles should be tied into a scheme if only by color. □



Needlework rug, 18 by 18, Juan Portela, New York.

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CONVERSATIONS ACROSS TIME

By Alexander Cockburn



An Australian landscape by Larry Babis from Sally Eauclaire's *New Color/New Work*

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by Sally Eauclaire
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THE VICTORIAN ART WORLD IN PHOTOGRAPHS
by Jeremy Maas
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Photographs and text by Diane Arbus
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HORST
by Valentine Lawford
Alfred A. Knopf, 384 pp., $55

CAMERAWORKS
by David Hockney
Alfred A. Knopf, 288 pp., $50

CINDY SHERMAN
by Cindy Sherman; Peter Schjeldahl
Pantheon, 197 pp., $16.95

There's a moving passage in one of T.S. Eliot's essays where he writes of the way works of art speak to each other across time and of the way each new work qualifies its predecessors. Because photography is still so young a form the echoes of such "conversations" across time are often startling in their strengths. On the table before me are photographs of two abbeys, each nourishing the other. One, taken by Roger Fenton in 1854, is of Rievaulx Abbey in Yorkshire; the other, taken by David Hockney in 1982, is of Bolton Abbey, also in Yorkshire. Fenton's composition is confident and tranquil. Through the window of the camera's lens the observer's eye is led boldly down the length of the church to the second "window" of the open southern end of the ruin, which gives onto the receding perspective of the countryside beyond. In the left middle ground Fenton posed a seated woman, as a grace note to the picture.

Hockney's picture is not, to be precise, a photograph at all, but many photographs assembled as a photo-collage. The eye is not so much led through the composition but let loose upon it, drifting from the abbey's ruins at the top of the picture, past the tombstones, past his mother's wistful face, past the montage of her blue-green plastic raincoat to her black old-person's shoes which address, across a patch of closely



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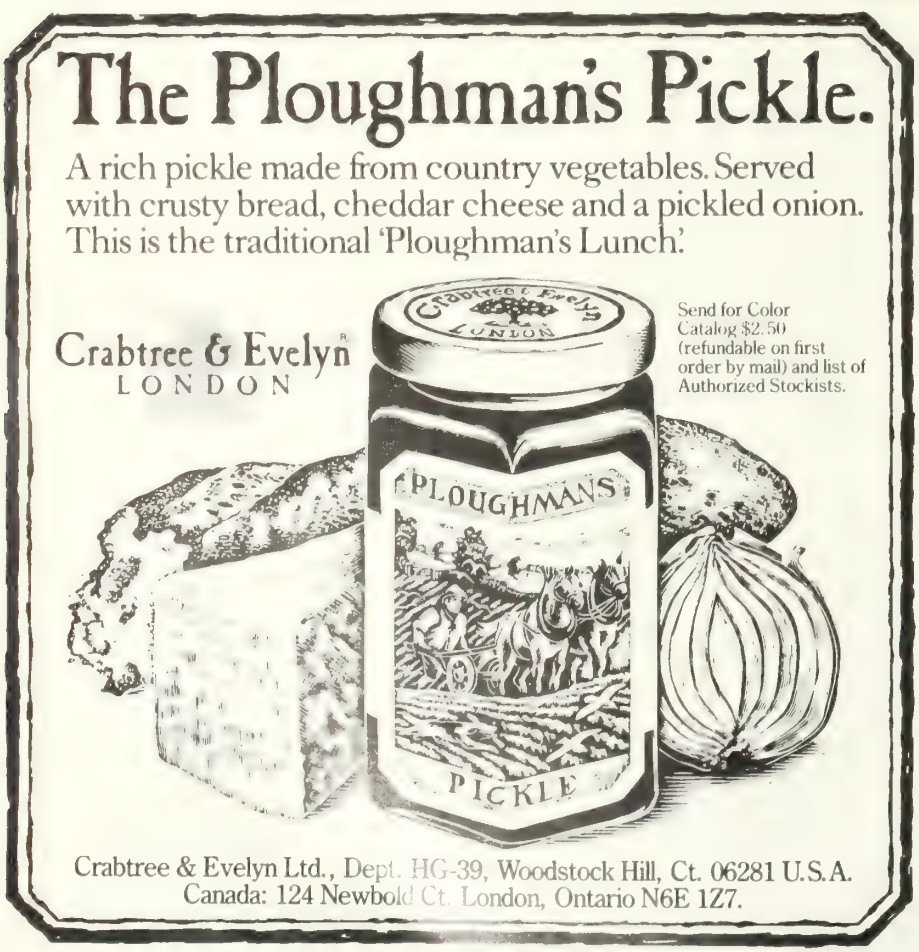
studied grass, the brogue shoe-tips of her son. Both photographs are elegiac but one imagines Fenton manhandling his heavy camera and tripod into position and thinks of time's assured Victorian tread. One can virtually hear the busy click of Hockney's 35-millimeter Pentax or Nikon and time becomes an anxious, nervy affair in which reality seems only to be ratified by the pictures one takes of it. One looks at the Fenton and sees how in the end it will demand the response of the Hockney, but how also the anxiety of the Hockney is allayed by Fenton's repose.

Of all the "conversations" between photographs in the books before me, that between our own times and the Pre-Raphaelite era seem the strongest. To be sure, other decades touch fingers, too. Clementina Lady Hawarden's "photographic study" of two women evokes (though the two share little else) the similarly formal posing of Horst's models. Horst's picture of Princess Elizabeth Chavchavadze, looking absurd on a vast sofa designed by Richard Wagner, anticipates the grotesqueries of Diane Arbus; Cindy Sherman's theatrical concerns recall the Victorians; the entire history of photographic minimalism is evoked in *An Open Land: Photographs of the Midwest, 1852–1982*. But the voices that ring out most clearly are those first photographers who so influenced the Pre-Raphaelites, whose mentor, Ruskin, could as well be speaking to the new photographic colorists of today (the other clear voices) as he was when he commanded young artists "to go to Nature in all singleness of heart and walk with her laboriously and trustingly, having no other thoughts but how best to penetrate her meaning. . . Then when their memories are stored and their imaginations fed, and their hands firm, let them take up the scarlet and gold, give reins to their fancy and show in what their heads are made of."

The photographers assembled in Sally Eauclaire's *New Color/New Work*—William Eggleston, Joel Meyerowitz, Joel Sternfeld, Larry Babis, Mitch Epstein, Len Jenshel, and the others—invoke not Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood but Robert Frank, Cartier-Bresson, Walker Evans, Atget, Sander and, beyond these great documentarists within the humanist's tradition, the photographers of the American frontier such as William Henry Jackson and Timothy O'Sullivan. Even so, the chromatic, formal, theatrical, and moral concerns seem to point to the Pre-Raphaelites and their photographer contemporaries such as Julia Cameron. And if the early frontier photographers really "invented" the look of the American West, Evans the look of a monochromatic Depression, Frank the American road in the fifties, then these colorists are still in the midst of an invention of America today as exciting as any from these great predecessors. Thus far they have remade the landscape, and now they must fully populate it. The signs are that they have transcended the "Americana" phase and will not collapse into an addiction to the eccentric and the perverse which gave Arbus her reputation, but which today lend her work a dated and vulgar timbre.

The Victorian photographic world is finely dealt with in Mike Weaver's intelligent *Julia Margaret Cameron* and in *The Golden Age of British Photography: 1839–1900* (not only a book but a superb exhibition starting its travels around the U.S. in Philadelphia this month). *The Victorian Art World in Photographs* by Jeremy Maas is a delightful complement with many entertaining anecdotes such as of the fecund William Powell Frith fathering twelve children by his wife Isabel and seven by his mistress Mary Alford. Alford lived conveniently near Paddington Station, which Frith spent two years painting. Mrs. Frith became suspicious when she observed her husband posting a letter in London telling her what a nice time he was having in Brighton.

If anyone invented the look of a certain period and place it was Horst in Paris in the thirties. Valentine Lawford's memoir of his old friend's life and work is not only a resplendent anthology of the photographic *oeuvre* but also a sensitive and entertaining tale. There is a Balzacian lilt to the evocation of the suffocating propriety of Horst Bohrmann's provincial origins in Thuringia, the desolation of work in



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BOOKS

Le Corbusier's atelier in Paris and gradual triumph as fashion photographer under the patronage of George Hoyningen-Huene and the Condé Nast organization. There are some marvelous flashes, often in Horst's captions to the photographs: Louise de Vilmorin meeting Horst in a Paris restaurant and dumping her poems, which she wanted him to illustrate, on the table in a child's coffin; Horst visiting Chanel and absent-mindedly rolling some modeling clay between finger and thumb and two weeks later receiving from Chanel a silver cigarette lighter molded from that same putty doodle; the Duchess of Windsor being photographed in New York in 1940 with just two pictures on the mantelpiece, of Queen Mary and of the Duke and Duchess in the company of Hitler. Horst's professionally alert eye perceives the tedium of Dietrich's face without von Sternberg lighting, and notes, alongside another memorable photograph, how Dietrich is using her mirror compact to spy on Jean Gabin, who is zealously lighting the cigarette of a female dinner companion.

If these books are "conversations" across time they are also emotional dialogues: Lawford with Horst, Steichen with Dorothy Norman (which could have been called "Pictures of Someone in Love"), and finally Hockney and his friend Gregory Evans. In his introduction to *Cameraworks* (an essay which appeared in *The New Yorker* earlier this year), Lawrence Weschler gives a good account of Hockney's Polaroid collages and of the later, more supple photo-collages and he competently outlines Hockney's formal and technical concerns. But Weschler's exposition leaves one unprepared for the strong emotional content of the collages, in which the fractured sensuous world is constantly defined in terms of the spatial relationship of the artist to intimates such as Gregory or the artist's mother. Hockney's famous feet constantly intrude as registration of the fact that the artist is not just looking but partaking and, with the end paper of two pairs of shoe tips facing each other across the white spread—shoe tips which we know from other pictures belong to Hockney and Gregory—we can recognize that *Cameraworks* is a technical reverie but also a sentimental education. □

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By Anthony Huxley



Flower, leaf, budded twig, and fruit—cross section (upper left) and whole (upper right) of the tulip tree, *Liriodendron Tulipfera*

There must, I think, be few people who do not derive pleasure from trees in principle. To many, indeed, there is something almost sacred about trees. This veneration probably goes back to very ancient times when most of the land was forest-covered; to short-lived primitive man trees must have seemed immortal, and almost every culture worshiped trees, tree-inhabiting deities, or at altars made in sacred groves.

The first gardens worthy of that name, when they arose perhaps five or six thousand years ago, seem to have fulfilled four basic conditions—enclosure, deliberately grown vegetables and fruits, water to irrigate these, and a shade-giving tree—"every man under his vine and under his fig tree," as we read in the Bible. In the earliest gardens of which we have records—in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Homer's Greece, and also in China—trees are a vital feature, and they are there for pleasure, not for use. The word paradise, indeed, is derived from the Persian *pardes,* meaning a park planted with trees.

One might say that shade-casting is more a *value* than a pleasure—in the Near East it was almost a necessity! In gardens some trees are indeed grown first for certain values, notably screening. But when one has room for only one tree, or a few, the possible pleasures rather than values must be carefully considered. A tree should have more assets than a single burst of flower—had I room for a single tree I do not think, for instance, it would be a deciduous magnolia, breathtaking and glorious as a big specimen can be when in flower.

The owner of the small garden must firstly choose trees which will not in

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time grow too huge, overshading the house, curtailing other kinds of gardening, and drying out the soil as roots spread—not to mention the dangers some tree roots pose to drains and house foundations. Nor should trees bush out too much in limited space: if too closely planted they will quite soon crowd and spoil each other.

Fortunately there are many fastigiate or narrow-erect trees to be found. These have mostly arisen as chance mutations, or "sports," as the gardener calls them, and include forms of maple, tulip tree, hornbeam, beech, oak, poplar, false acacia; among flowering and fruiting trees there are fastigiate cherries, crab apples, hawthorns, and mountain ashes. The name Fastigiata or Columnaris often indicates this habit in catalogues. Other trees usually grow fairly narrow naturally, like the maidenhair-tree (ginkgo), and many eucalyptus have quite upright tops of airy glaucous foliage which produce relatively little shade.

A number of conifers are narrow-upright, like the barely hardy Italian cypress so beloved of Mediterranean gardeners. There are tougher alternatives to this, like the well-named juniper Skyrocket and, where space allows, the dark-foliaged incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*)—I recall a splendid tight group of these thrusting up like green flames among more orthodox trees at the Westonbirt Arboretum.

Most conifers, of course, are evergreen, and a proportion of evergreens helps to "furnish" a garden in winter. Too many can be oppressive, and one special pleasure of deciduous trees is to watch their bare outlines gradually soften as leaf buds burgeon in spring; how marvelous, for instance, to watch a chestnut leaf unfurling from its sticky casing—there's prepackaging for you! Trees chosen for fall color (which seems to be so much more splendid in parts of North America than in Britain) give another bonus—a bittersweet one perhaps, presaging winter, but a spectacle I would not be without, with its temporary carpeting of the ground with gold and fire.

Winter outline can be a pleasure in itself. My favorite is the "dragon-claw willow" (*Salix Matsudana* 'Tortuosa'), every branch and twig being spiraled. The native British hornbeam (*Carpinus Betulus*) has an elegant flamelike form, which extends to a splendid symmetrical oval in the many-branched zelkovas. Pendulous trees like the classic weeping willow (really too large and root-invasive for town plots), or on smaller scale Young's weeping birch (*Betula pendula* 'Youngii'), the weeping purple beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea Pendula'), and the curious grafted Camperdown elm are as pleasing in winter as summer, especially when coated in hoarfrost. Another very pleasing pendulous tree is the weeping pear (*Pyrus salicifolia* 'Pendula'), with its gray willowlike leaves.

Weepers usually have branches down to the ground—nice for children's secret domains if not for other plants. But in tight-planted plots like my own most of the trees are chosen for clear trunks—many are bought as standards already "run up" for this, or have their lower branches trimmed away as the trunks extend. This allows planting at ground level close around the tree and reduces the amount of shade cast—for the first few years at any rate!

This brings me to the trunks of trees, a most important pleasure at close quarters. I have mentioned eucalyptus—mostly their fast-rising trunks are gray or white, or have handsome peeling patches as in *E. niphophila.* White trunks stand out in enclosed yards, and birches are high on the list. The common birch, *Betula pendula,* is not to be despised (I knew a gardener who



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scrubbed his birches with brush and soap to enhance their whiteness) and is particularly pretty grown as a miniature grove. The American paper birch, *B. papyrifera,* with its flaky bark is good, and the same effect comes from *B. Jacquemontii,* which forms groves in the Kashmir Himalayas. Forms of *B. Ermanii* are really pure white, while in *B. septentrionalis* the stems are in subtle orange shades. These are airy-leaved trees but a warning—their roots run radially just below soil level.

Cherries often have shiny trunks, the best of all being the Tibetan *Prunus serrulata,* with mahogany-colored bark gleaming as if polished. Another group of exciting trunks is found among the maples. *Acer griseum* has cinnamon-colored bark which peels back in large flakes in a delightful manner. The snakebarks like *A. Davidii, A. Hersii,* and *A. Pensylvanicum* are aptly named for their dashing green-and-white-striped trunks and boughs.

Leaf color and leaf shape are further pleasures, the first perhaps more important. Startling associations can be made, like one in my own garden with bright gold *Robinia* Frisia next to an existing purple plum (*Prunus Pissardii*)—maybe a fraction obvious but certainly telling. Gold, yellow- or cream-variegated, red and purple, blue and gray and silver leaves are all available; among the last I must not forget my favorite whitebeam, *Sorbus Aria*—alas too large for my own garden—and its huge-leaved relation *S. mitchellii.*

As I suggested, to me flowers are a bonus on a tree which should provide pleasure most year round. Cherries, crab apples, thorns, magnolias, dogwoods are among the obvious contenders; chestnuts large and also small, like the American buckeyes; mauve-flowered paulownia and catalpa, aptly named tulip tree, evergreen eucryphia so splendid in late summer, and the handkerchief tree, davidia—what an amazing sight is a tree in flower, even if one has had to wait fifteen years for it. Fruits and seed pods follow on many of these to be appreciated in their turn.

A single tree in a small yard can combine many of these pleasures. But be warned—trees can become mania. In my 140-foot-long "suburban strip" I already have 35 trees. . . . The pleasure I really dream of is to possess grassy acres in which to continue planting. □

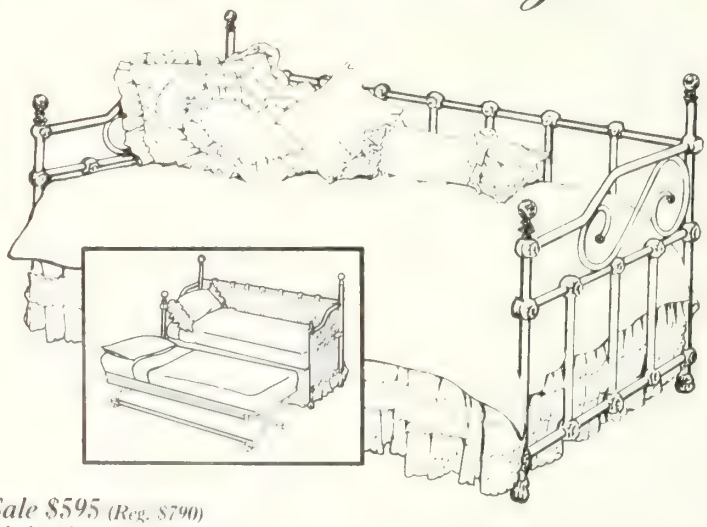
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BOURGEOIS VISIONARIES

Surrealists' houses embody a conventional sense of place

By George Melly

"Human psychism in its most universal aspect has found in the gothic castle and its accessories a point of fixation so precise that it becomes essential to discover what would be the equivalent for our own period. (Everything leads us to believe that there is no question of it being a factory.)" André Breton



Breton's observation, couched as usual in that exact and solemn tone, might suggest that the Surrealists, whenever it were practical, would have chosen to live in castles. In general, however, they were more modestly housed. Most of them, including Breton himself when in Paris, made do with studios or apartments, and even those painters who were later to achieve prosperity and retire to the country appear to have favored modern houses, or at any rate nothing so grandiose as a château.

Financial considerations apart, this yearning for the castle and the rejection of it as a suitable place to live is indicative of a dichotomy in the Surrealist soul; an aristocratic imagination at odds with the belief in the necessity for continuous revolution and, for many years, "the triumph of the proletariat."

Above all there was the constant but by no means successful struggle to avoid the takeover of the visual aspects of Surrealism by fashionable society, whose decorators and couturiers recognized it as an easy and attractive method of amusing their bored and novelty-obsessed clients.

The solution for the hard-core Surrealists themselves, was, in the main, to cultivate a certain austerity in their daily lives. Their own interiors presented an almost academic banality relieved only by the pictures they hung on their walls and the objects they displayed on the carefully arranged shelves; bourgeois order and good sense, even personal modesty dictated their surroundings. Imaginative extravagance surfaced only in their collections.

The classic Surrealist interior looks more like an alchemist's cell than anything else. Its effect was of the poetic incongruity of a sixteenth-century "cabinet of curiosities"; fantasy corrected by a severe geometry.

Breton occupied successively two studios at 42 rue Fontaine, Montmartre, and if the extraordinary artifacts they contained were replaced by, say, Egyptian or Greek antiquities, they could have been the apartments of an archaeologist of severe tastes. Their furniture was solid and practical, their color scheme restrained to the point of drabness. Writing of the earlier and larger studio, André Thirion described it as "Like one big museum." Everything "had its place." This curatorlike approach might appear at odds with the Surrealist aim of breaking down the barriers between dream and reality, but there were two prejudices that may help to explain this "normality": the Surrealist mistrust of aesthetics and their vigorous rejection of bohemianism. Dali alone, as we shall see, was willing and eager to embrace both extravagance and luxury, to allow his obsessions and later on their exhibitionist exploitation to invade his living space. The rest of them lived like doctors or academics.

The most extreme example of this rule, extreme even to the point of caricature, was the painter René Magritte. According to our mutual friend, the late Belgian poet and collagist E.L.T. Mesens, Magritte's penurious youth was spent in apartments of necessary austerity, but by the time I came to know him, comparative prosperity allowed him to buy a somewhat characterless, detached house at 97 rue des Mimosas in a respectable suburb of



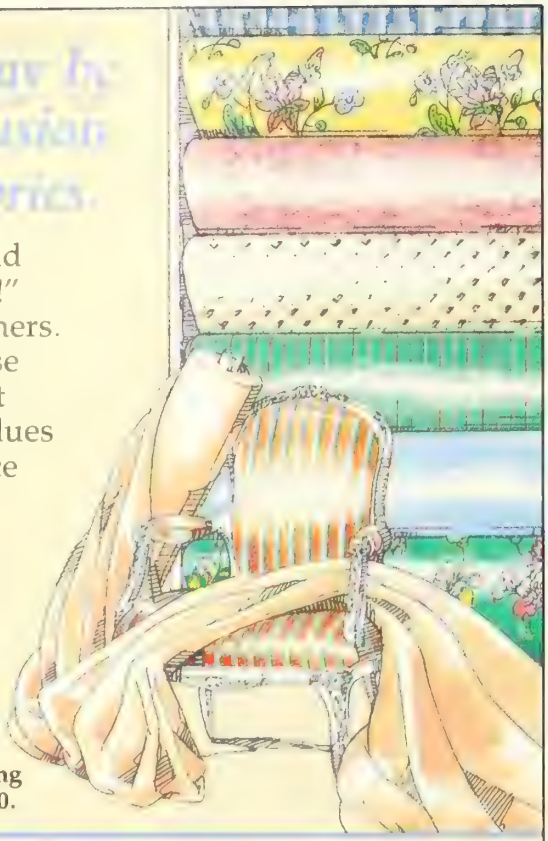
Top In Magritte's bedroom, his t[illegible] *above* Magritte in his living room, 1965


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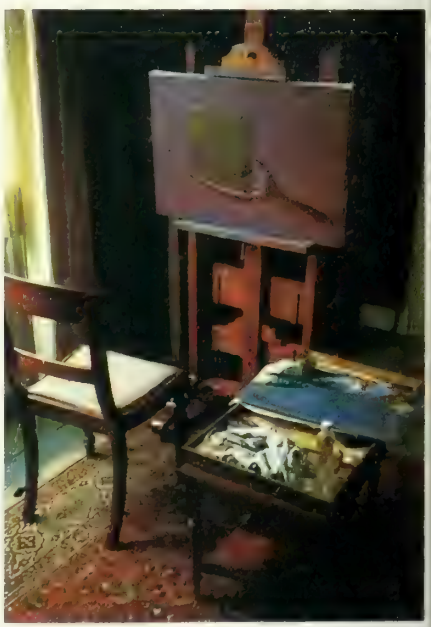
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Brussels, a villa guarded by a succession of small identical dogs all of which, irrespective of sex, were called "Lulu."

The yapping of "Lulu" and the chime of a two-toned bell does something to prepare one for an interior of inspired banality, less indeed than that of a doctor or academic than of a well-to-do car salesman. Georgette Magritte is extremely house-proud. Everything is polished and shining, as much today as it was during her husband's lifetime. Of Magritte's own iconography there is, apart from a few of his pictures and a bottle painted to resemble a nude, only his bowler hat and, hanging on the stairs, a tuba. For the rest there is a baby grand piano in the living room, rugs of rather garish Oriental design, silk curtains, two gilt cherubs, while on every flat surface there are collections of china birds on china twigs, and "novelty" clocks play little tunes more or less on the hour, so that for five minutes or so the house whirs and chirps like a tiny fun-fair. Magritte had no studio. He painted at an easel in a small annex to the bedroom, painted furthermore with such care that there was no need for anything under the easel to protect the carpet, while he himself worked in a dark suit and sober tie, looking like a slightly old-fashioned and punctilious bank teller.

When I questioned Mesens as to the



Magritte worked on an uncovered Oriental carpet in his studio.

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spirit behind this suburban "castle," he told me that Magritte, on principle, never interfered with his wife's taste. Nevertheless, I got the impression that this most sardonic of the Surrealists enjoyed the effect on those earnest admirers who visited him during his later years. He was a great deadpan comedian, intransigent in his "normality" most of the time which, as a result, made his very frequent and carefully judged acts of outrage appear the more forceful. Similarly the tuba on the stairs and the bottle painted to look like a nude woman and placed among the clocks and china birds carry an exaggerated charge.

In his work too, Magritte constantly relied on the panic of the ordinary. His rooms are mostly petit-bourgeois, his objects mass-produced. Two of his carpets from the rue de Mimosas are to be seen on the floor in *Personal Values,* a painting of a bedroom in which huge toilet articles have taken over. His piano, enclosed by a wedding ring, is the subject of *The Fortunate Hand.* His wife, Georgette, is the model for almost all of his unnerving sexual speculations. Even "Lulu" in the guise of *The Civilizer* makes a solitary appearance. Yet Magritte also speculated occasionally on the Gothic castle. In *The Castle of the Pyrenees,* it is carved from the rock on which it stands, a huge boulder floating over the sea. In *Almayer's Folly,* a medieval tower is shown against a red-gold back-cloth. It has been literally "pulled up by the roots."

Magritte's cheerful and possibly careful lack of given taste was rare. Most of those associated with the movement were closer to Breton's serious negation of décor. Mesens himself lived for most of his life in a series of London apartments neutral in color certainly, but with understated "good" furniture, mostly English Regency. Here too the magnificent collection of paintings, the marvelous objects both primitive and folkloric, established that familiar ambience in which most of the Surrealists felt, in the most literal sense, "at home."

On the other hand, when it came to public manifestations the group resorted to very elaborate means to create the kind of Surrealist "reality" one might have expected to find in their own apartments. The great exhibitions, most often staged under the direction of Marcel Duchamp, were aimed to sabotage the customary reverent approach to the display of artworks. The international exhibition held in Paris in 1938 was perhaps the most sensational and certainly created the maximum frisson. Apart from the pictures and objects there were 1,200 sacks of coal hanging from the ceiling, the floor was uneven and scattered with leaves and twigs. There was a lighted brazier, four luxurious if disheveled beds, one in each corner, and a pool surrounded by pampas grass. Several of the paintings were hung on static "revolving doors." At the opening the visitors were handed torches to examine the pictures and the lighting was kept very low, but the torches ran out, the artists complained, and for the rest of the run the illumination was turned up.

Outside in the lobby was an old taxi overgrown with ivy. Inside a steady artificial downpour of rain fell on the occupants, a goggled chauffeur, his head encased in a shark's jaws while his customer, an erotic shop-window dummy slumped in the back, provided a promenade for a number of large Burgundian snails. This was the work of Salvador Dali.

The opening was a success but largely with the very public the Surrealists, with the exception of Dali, most despised: the fashionable, the snobbish, *le tout Paris.* The problem arose because of the shift on emphasis in the movement from the poets to the painters. Initially, during the "heroic" era of the twenties, the visual arts had acted as the handmaiden of the movement. By the thirties this was no longer the case. Paintings and sculpture, unlike poetry and polemics, have a commercial value, and the Surrealist artists, despite Breton's slightly confused misgivings, earned their living from their work. It must be pointed out that both Breton and Éluard supplemented their meager earnings as writers by picture dealing.

There was also the problem of financing certain expensive manifesta-

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tions such as the publication of limited editions and films, and the move from the austerity of the early magazines with their few and smudgy illustrations toward a more luxurious format. To achieve funding compromise was a necessity. The "proletariat" were unlikely to cough up the money for such extravagant ventures.

Edward James, who paid for several numbers of *Minotaure,* the glossy, splendidly produced magazine which from 1933 on had become the Surrealists' house journal, told me that whereas the painters, of whom he was a generous patron, treated him as a friend, Breton and Éluard made it clear that for them he was no more than a rich dilettante to be made use of.

Dali joined the group in 1929 at the moment when the ideological crisis with the communists was just beginning to brew. He brought with him an imagination working at full throttle and an immense facility, but no particular commitment to any ideology beyond his own obsession. By the time



Man Ray's Paris studio/apartment, c. 1925

the break with the communists had become absolute and several of the distinguished founders of the movement had been expelled or resigned for political differences, Dali had emerged, for the public at any rate, as *the* Surrealist. For Breton it was evident that Dali's gifts, his controlled paranoia, his inspired mania, had rescued Surrealism at a moment when it appeared to be on the edge of ideological bankruptcy. On the debit side his open social *arrivisme,* which with typically hysterical ingenuity he justified as "surrealist," offered a serious threat to the purity of the movement.

Dali alone lived in an interior similar to that of the Surrealist exhibitions. He kept his cutlery, for example, in drawers concealed in the body of an erect stuffed polar bear, a gift from Edward James that he dyed pink. Nor did he confine himself to creating his own décor. He painted a picture of an apartment that simultaneously created the illusion of Mae West's face, and although this was never realized, her lips in the form of a pink satin sofa were manufactured in a small edition and found their way into several fashionable drawing rooms.

His house in Port Lligat is his vulgar monument; a stage set in which carefully placed fetishes provide easy pickings for lazy journalists. A friend of mine told me that he once went there for lunch. The main course was lobster with chocolate sauce. The table on the terrace was elaborately set with silver candelabra. The candles were ceremoniously lit, but the flames, as it was broad daylight, were invisible. "Dali," says Edward James, "is like a comedian who ran out of jokes thirty years ago."

The war saved Surrealism from *snobbismes.* Many of the leading Surrealists spent the war years in America, where those painters who practiced automatism were to have a considerable effect on the future Abstract Expressionists. Robert Motherwell told me that Breton used to lead him and other young New York painters around the junk shops on the East Side demanding that they identify which objects were or were not Surrealist. For a time there was considerable excitement around the movement; magazines were published, exhibitions held, but it didn't "take."

After the war Breton returned to Paris and relaunched Surrealist activities, but there was no renewed danger of appropriation by the beau monde. Most of the geniuses of the movement had or were soon to part company to be replaced by noisy young yes-men of little talent. Surrealism, for the smart and the intellectuals, had become a "bore." The pictures were another matter. The work of the great artists



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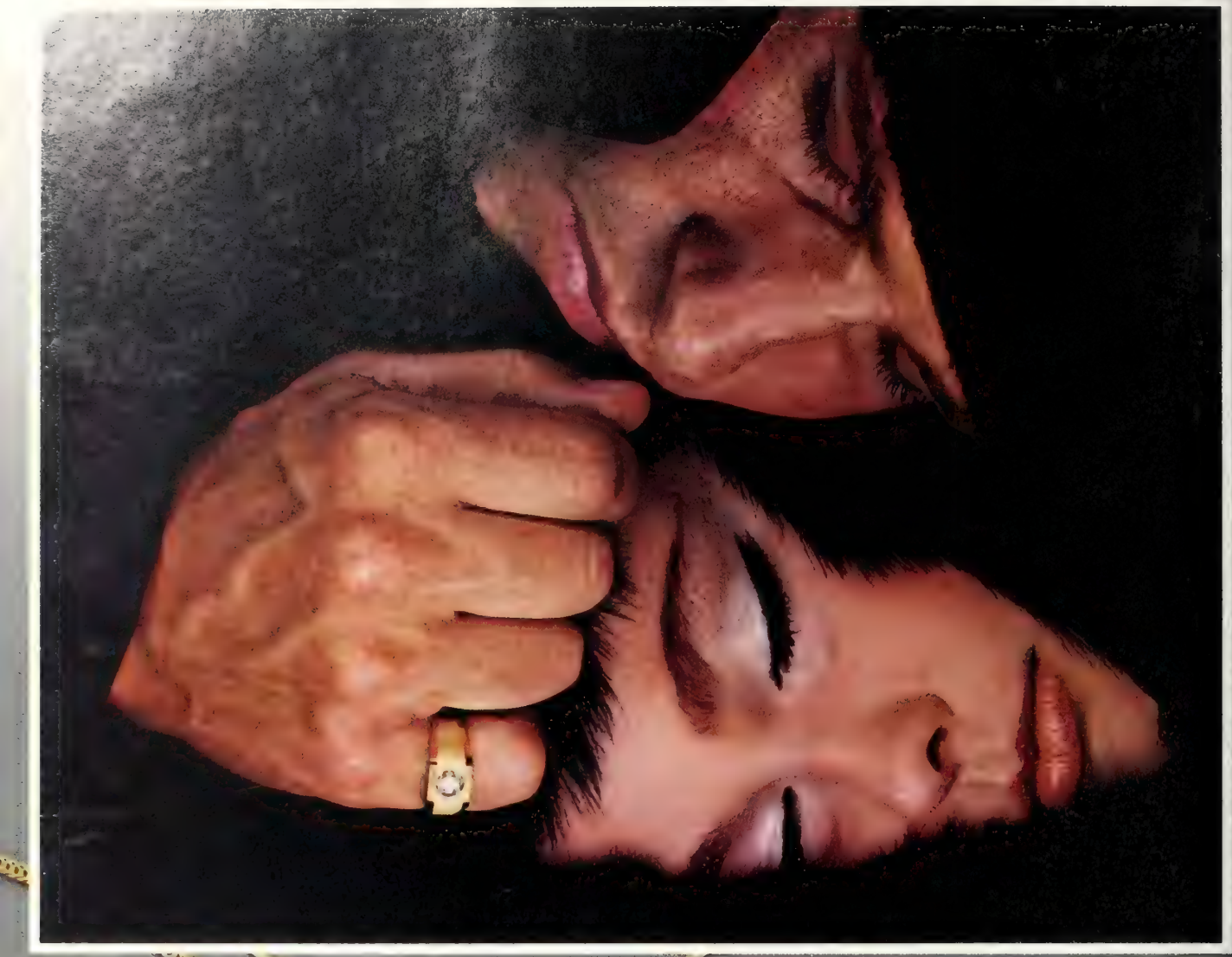


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slowly reemerged as investments or entered the museums. The revolutionary spirit that had inspired them was largely forgotten or deliberately ignored.

Official Surrealism produced no architecture and mistrusted contemporary décor as frivolous, but this was not to say that it restricted its enthusiasm to "the Gothic castle and its accessories." In Paris, during its early days, the young poets selected "Privileged Places" where they recognized the Surrealist spirit. There was the Passage de l'Opéra, the principal subject of Aragon's marvelous book *The Paris Peasant*, and soon to be pulled down. Here the Dadaists had met. Here poetry talked. Breton himself named several spots in his anti-novel *Nadja,* perhaps the purest exposition of the Surrealist life ever written. There is, to quote from the caption under one of the mysterious photographs that illustrate the book, "...the very beautiful and very useless Porte St. Denis." Max Ernst, in his collage novel *Une Semaine de Bonté,* celebrated certain corners: "La Cour de Dragon," "Le Lion de Belfort," while the Buttes-Chaumont park in Montmartre with its Suicides' Bridge held a great fascination for them all.

It was Dali who, almost alone, recognized the then-despised Art Nouveau as "edible architecture" and began the reinstatement of perhaps its greatest practitioner, Antonio Gaudí. He also, but here with markedly less enthusiasm from the rest of the group, became obsessed with the palaces and grottos of Mad King Ludwig of Bavaria. . .

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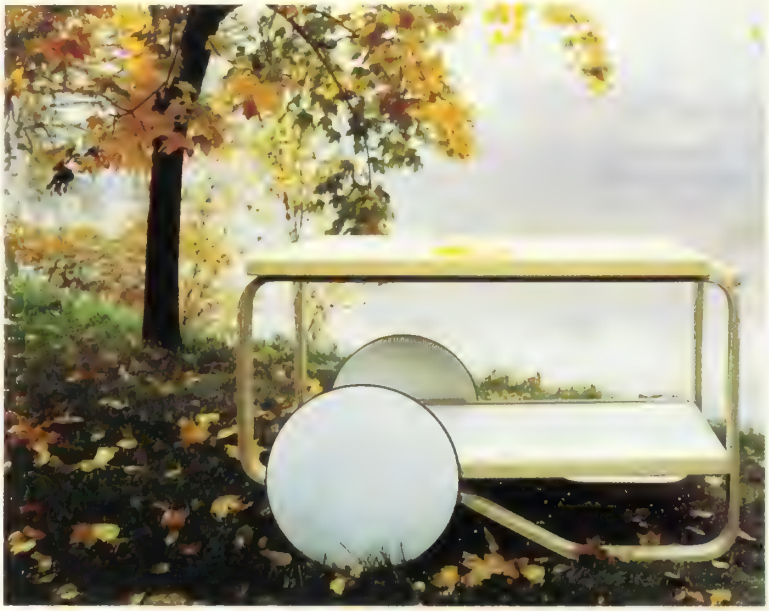
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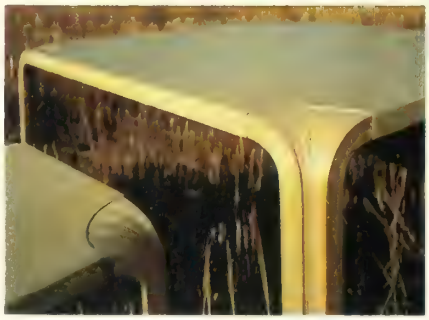
THE NATURAL

A MOMA retrospective of Alvar Aalto's furniture and glass reminds us of the sensuousness and humanity he brought to modern design

By Martin Filler

When the great Finnish architect Alvar Aalto was a visiting professor at MIT in 1947 (during the construction of his Baker House dormitory there), he followed a daily routine no doubt unique in the annals of modern architectural education. According to one of his students, now a prominent Boston architect, the master would arrive at the design studio at 9 A.M. armed with a bottle of akvavit, which he placed on a corner of his drafting table. After taking an opening shot, Aalto began to make figure studies of the nude female model present at those sessions. As the morning progressed the akvavit dwindled, and the architect, his arm fluidly capturing the model's contours, became progressively looser in his movements. By noon, the bottle was empty, the model was clothed, and he was ready to begin with architecture.





Top: Aalto's teacart of 1933–35. *Above:* His tables of 1954, with the fan-shaped corner motif that was one of his subtlest but most complex (and costliest) details.

As telling as this anecdote is, all one needs to do is look at Alvar Aalto's furniture to know that it was the human form which prompted his biomorphic aesthetic. The curve was for Alvar Aalto what the right angle was for the architects of the Bauhaus. Now, at a time when much early modern design is being debunked as physically cold and spiritually sterile, the furniture and objects created by Aalto firmly contradict the notion that the masterminds of the Modern Movement were determined to make their Procrustean Bed and have us sleep in it. At his best, Aalto produced designs that are life-affirming in the fullest sense that a man-made object can be, as logical and ageless as an egg or a well-toned body.

The passage of more than fifty years since their first manufacture finds several of Aalto's pieces—the subject of a retrospective at New York's Museum of Modern Art through November 27—among the most durable classics of twentieth century design, possessing a greater likelihood of still being used in the next century than most other domestic designs now in production.

Aalto's reputation since his death in 1976, at the age of 78, remains much as it had been in his lifetime: he has not faded from his profession's awareness in the mysterious way that often occurs after the close of an epochal career. Aalto remains a law unto himself, a case apart. In that respect he most resembles that other great twentieth-century architectural titan, Frank Lloyd Wright, who had very similar beliefs in the organic nature of design and who likewise has had many followers but no true heirs.

To a large degree, Aalto's renown beyond a faithful following of architectural enthusiasts and true believers in timeless modern interior design has been limited by accidents of history as much as by impositions of geography. That the majority of Alvar Aalto's architectural works were built in his native Finland places them far from the familiar crossroads of transatlantic culture, and they are therefore known to Americans largely through photographs alone. This is much to the detriment of our understanding, for an architecture as spatially sophisticated as Aalto's prevents the printed image from doing it much justice.

Aalto's furniture, on the other hand, is of course portable, but the possibil-

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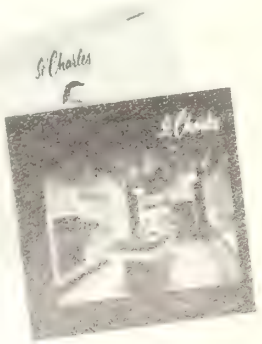
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ity of its wider acceptance in the United States was interrupted by the hiatus of World War II and then largely superseded by the availablility of the new American designs of Charles and Ray Eames for Herman Miller once the war was over. And while wood remained Aalto's primary material, the Eameses expanded his aesthetic with their experiments in molded fiberglass, plastic, and metal.

Aalto's pioneering role seems all the more important when one considers that significant innovation in furniture design of the sort he was responsible for has seldom been accompanied by promise of such acceptance. If any revolutionary twentieth-century furniture could be described as "user-friendly" then this is it: comfortable, practical, adaptable, and affordable, it celebrates the beauty of natural materials and yet spares its owners the tyranny of maintenance. Although traditionalists have long scoffed at the déclassé aura that clings to modern Scandinavian furniture, imaginative designers have been aware for some time of how well it mixes with period pieces.

A fine case in point is the London home of the architect James Stirling, whose own buildings show the pronounced, if greatly distilled, influence of Aalto. Stirling's turn-of-the-century house is filled with a spectacular collection of museum-quality Regency furniture. Next to his superb works by Thomas Hope, George Bullock, and George Smith he has placed a pair of Aalto's famous molded plywood Paimio armchairs of 1931. Their gracefully curving, volute-like continuous seat backs are the perfect foil for the sweeping lines of the early-nineteenth-century masterpieces Stirling keeps beside them. Painted in the original terra cotta—rather than the lackluster black of the ones still made today—the Paimio chairs take on an almost historical feeling, and serve to recall that Aalto himself was influenced most of all by the leading furniture designer of the Biedermeier period—contemporaneous with the Regency—the German inventor Michael Thonet.

It was Thonet's discoveries in bentwood and molded plywood that formed the basis for Aalto's furniture design techniques. But it was Aalto who fulfilled Thonet's dream of an all-plywood chair, which the father of modern furniture design was never able to execute. At the time when Aalto's colleagues in Germany were transfixed by the design possibilities of bent metal tubing, he was exploring the still-unexhausted potential of the material that is one of the most plentiful natural resources of his homeland. Indeed, the Finnish woodworking tradition had been given new life during Aalto's youth in the heyday of the arts and crafts movement.

Throughout his life, Aalto retained his belief in the architect as the most qualified designer of the man-made environment. But his conception of total design was rather different from that of the generation that preceded him. Unlike Frank Lloyd Wright and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, almost all of whose furniture and object designs were made for specific functions in specific interiors, Aalto tended to design pieces that were meant to be used interchangeably in an unlimited number of potential settings. For example, the Paimio chair, often assumed to have been made expressly for the architect's Paimio Sanatorium, was actually devised independently, even



The molded-plywood Paimio chair of 1931

though it was named for that contemporary project. Aalto's furniture thus had the virtually universal applicability of that of the International Style, but his preference for wood and fiber rather than the steel and glass of Bauhaus-influenced schemes gave his furniture a greater humanity than the elegant but cool creations of a Mies or Le Corbusier.

Starting in 1928 with his first mass-produced design for a plywood stacking chair (earlier Aalto pieces were unique, Classically influenced examples that he made for himself, his family, and friends) Aalto involved himself intimately with the manufacturing pro-

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cess, working closely on the development of new machinery that would allow plywood to be molded and bent into bolder and more structurally sound shapes. In 1935, with his first wife, Aino, and Maire Gullichsen, the heiress to a lumber and wood-pulp fortune, Aalto founded Artek, the furniture company that still makes his designs (which are distributed in this country through ICF). From then until the outbreak of World War II in 1939, Aalto produced his best designs, including the famous teacart introduced in 1935 and the stunningly dramatic chaise longue that took the bending of plywood as far as it could go both physically and compositionally.

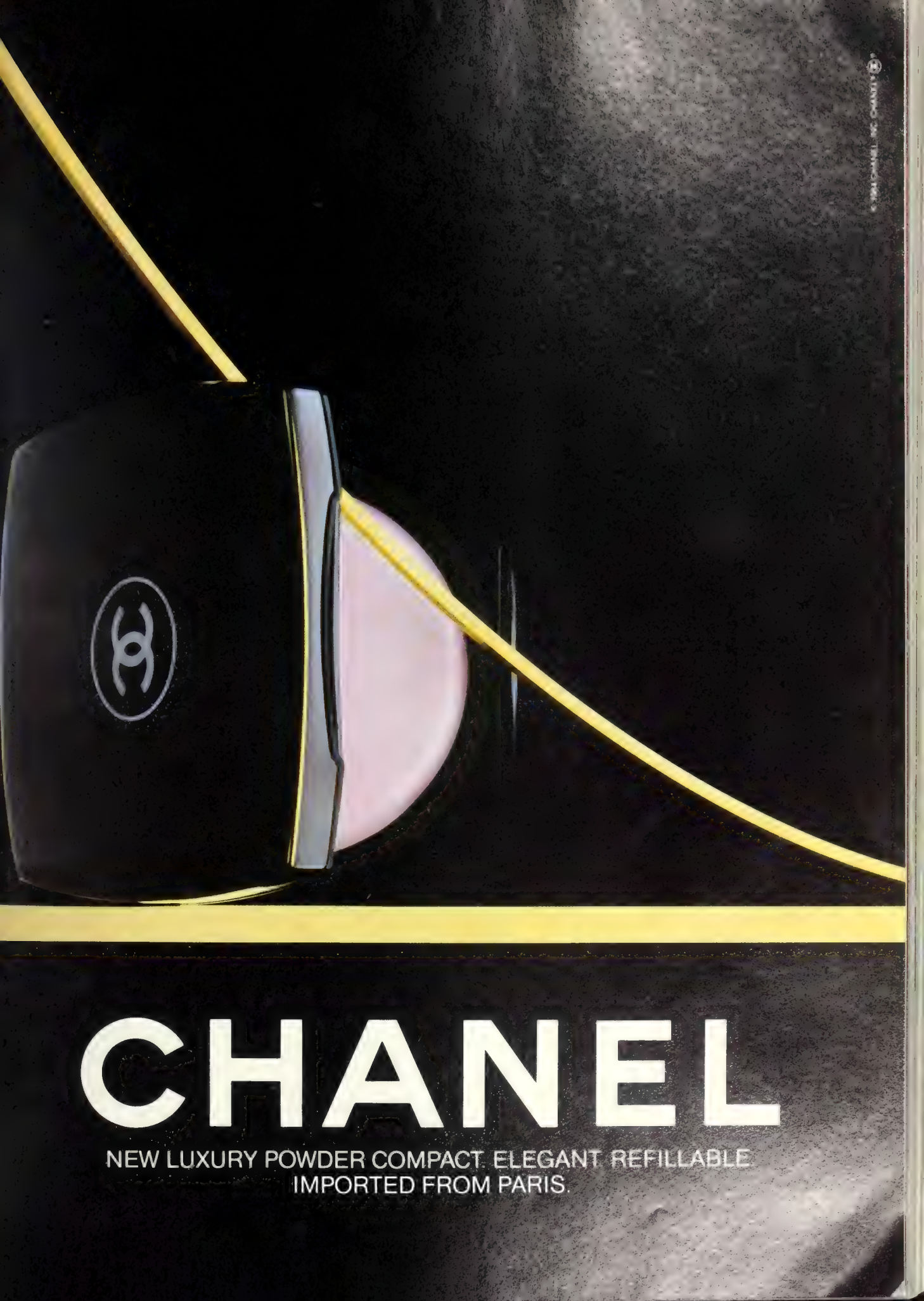
From that period also dates Aalto's first glassware designs, including the famous free-form vase he made in 1937 for the Savoy Restaurant in Helsinki. Though of limited usefulness—it is very hard to make a few flowers look like much in it—the Savoy vase nonetheless possesses a sculptural strength that allows it to hold its own even without flowers, while it never distracts from the blossoms when it is fully filled. It is among the 35 pieces of glass in the MOMA show, accompanied by an equal number of pieces of furniture and more than fifty drawings that pertain to those designs.

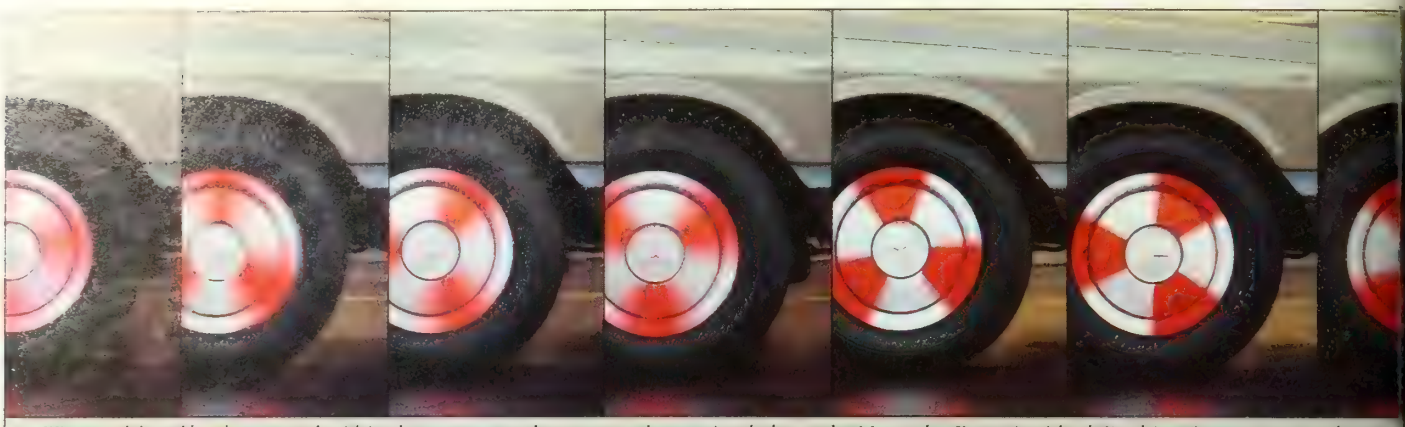
After World War II, Aalto's activity as a furniture designer was limited to two brief spurts, one in 1947, and the other from 1954 to 1956. From the first dates Aalto's experiments with the laminated-wood jointing technique that became a veritable obsession for him. Those branchlike bundles of plywood strips provided greater flexibility and strength in the continuous arm-and-leg elements of his postwar seating. But Aalto's wider fascination with the method is apparent from the way in which he transformed those test patterns into wall reliefs that he treated with all the seriousness of fine art.

The culmination of those experiments came in the development in 1954 of the fan-shaped corner motif that Aalto perfected for stools and tables, which might be viewed as a summation of his attitude toward materials and form. Here Aalto makes wood do something it never does in nature, but accomplishes it in such a completely "organic" manner that we are not reminded of the contortions the wood had to be put through to attain this seemingly natural configuration. It is a triumph of technique, but one in which artifice never makes an ungainly grab for our attention, which remains firmly fixed on the familiar and comfortable qualities of the wood itself.

This one detail could stand as a metaphor for Aalto's whole approach, which eschews an obvious show of its intricacies and refinements. Its deceptive simplicity is one of its most attractive traits, and no doubt a significant factor in its enduring appeal. Alvar Aalto's surname means "wave" in Finnish, and how appropriate that seems, for his impact has been like a wave on the shore of the art of our times: strong, steady, rhythmic, but elusive, and leaving deep impressions. □




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In terms of enhancing control of the car in a braking emergency, the Mercedes-Benz Anti-lock Braking System may be the best ally a driver has ever had. In terms of automotive leadership, this major advance underscores the truth of the motto below: for 1985, as for the past 99 years, the automobiles of Mercedes-Benz are indeed engineered like no other cars in the world.



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JOURNAL

FIRST-PRIZE DRAWINGS

Old Master Drawings from the Albertina. National Gallery of Art, Washington, through Jan. 13, 1985; The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, Mar. 8–May 26.

The old master drawings in Vienna's Albertina are the most famous public collection of their kind in the world, given visibility by their isolation from all the other kinds of art on view at the Kunsthistorisches Museum nearby. Begun in 1769 by Duke Albert von Sachsen-Teschen (hence the name Albertina), it received the core of its wealth from the collection assembled by Count Giacomo Durazzo,



THE ALBERTINA COLLECTION VIENNA

an Austrian ambassador to Venice in the eighteenth century, and from the Hapsburgs' Schatzkammer. Durazzo encouraged his patrons to collect all schools and all periods, to aim for quality and range.

Thus while the German drawings from the Albertina are peerless, all major schools are well represented, as this expertly chosen selection demonstrates. The show begins with superb examples of Dürer—no fewer than ten sheets—and continues with others by Rubens, Rembrandt, Cortona, Watteau, and Greuze. It is an opportunity for intimate encounters with great art that should not be missed.

Ann Sutherland Harris



THE ALBERTINA COLLECTION VIENNA

Left: Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Spring,* 1565. *Top:* Peter Paul Rubens, *Susanna Fourment,* c. 1625. *Below:* Rembrandt van Rijn, *An Elephant,* 1637.



REFLECTIONS IN A SILVER EYE

If the name Karl Struss (1886–1981) doesn't ring a bell, don't feel alone. Struss's remarkable career as a still photographer in the circle of such greats as Alfred Stieglitz and Clarence White was almost completely forgotten after his migration to Hollywood





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in 1918 to work as a cinematographer.

Happily, the situation is being remedied by Fort Worth's Amon Carter Museum, which in 1983 acquired Struss's entire photographic estate, including the richly evocative *Sails,* 1930, *far left,* and *Gloria Swanson,* 1919, *left.* The museum is planning a major retrospective for 1987. *Ann Priester*


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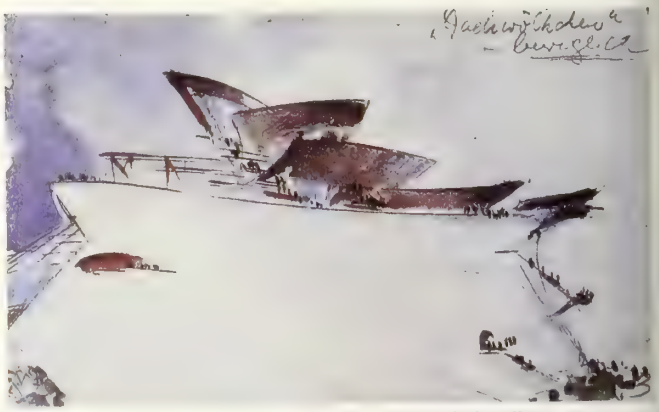
The Adventure of Ideas: Architecture and Philosophy Since the Industrial Revolution. New National Gallery, West Berlin, through Nov. 18.



Bruno Taut, project for glass "glacier" in the Alps, 1917–19.



Frank Lloyd Wright, Winslow stables, River Forest, Illinois, 1893



Hans Scharoun, project for "movable roof cloudlets," 1919



Chirico, *Intérieur metaphysique*

Architecture exhibitions are notorious for their inability to capture the essence of the art form within the confines of a gallery. And attempts at approximating the experience of architecture through synesthetic means—from movies to life-size mock-ups—only underscore the impossibility of substituting anything for the real thing.

Mindful of that paradox, the Italian architectural historian Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani conceived this show in terms of modern architecture as an intellectual rather than a formal development. This ambitious undertaking—which Lampugnani startlingly claims is "an overview [that] will for the first time be based on the history of ideas"—has been divided into nine rather simplistic "isms": Historicism, Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Organicism, Realism, Expressionism, Traditionalism, Technologism, and Rationalism.



K.F. Schinkel, project for Orianda Palace, the Crimea, 1838

Each of these "isms" is discussed by one of the nine architectural historians and one of the nine philosophers invited by Lampugnani, including Alan Colquhoun, Kenneth Frampton, Colin Rowe, and Manfredo Tafuri. Their ideas are often original and provocative, but the overall tone of the effort is clouded by obscurantist jargon. And while it is possible to mull over the more opaque passages in the essays until enlightenment comes, it is easier to do so with the catalogue than standing in the museum, for this is one of the most daunting "book-on-the-wall" exhibitions ever mounted.

Far more rewarding (and reason enough to make a detour to visit this show) are its stunning visual riches, some five hundred architectural drawings, and a hundred paintings, photos, books, and models, by everyone from Piranesi to Portoghesi, Jefferson to Johnson, and Lutyens to Le Corbusier. Here the eye is able to penetrate where the mind cannot, providing far more understanding than the turgid texts.

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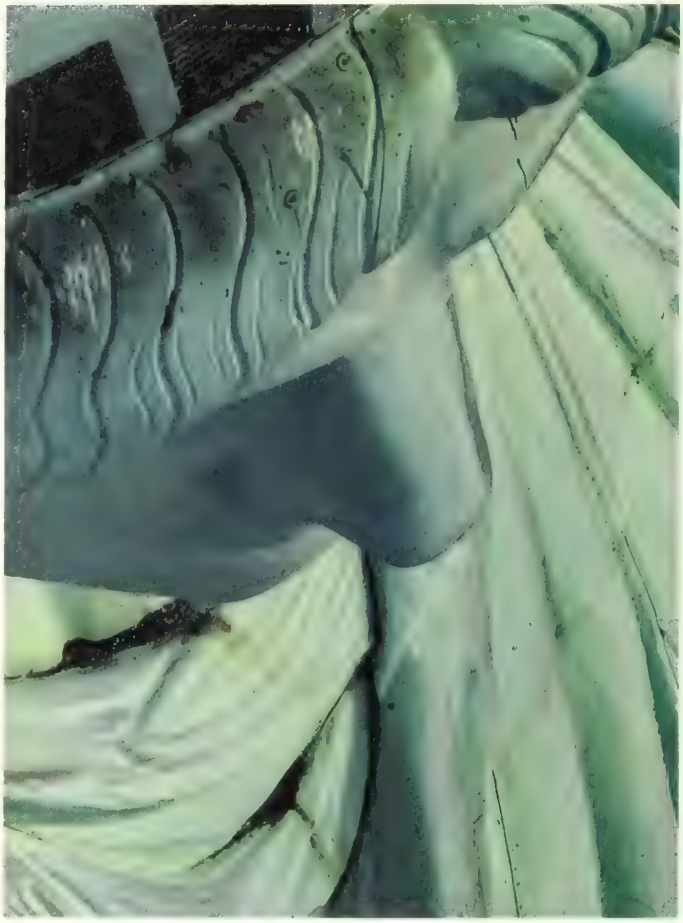
THE UNGENTLE RAIN

Acid precipitation threatens our architectural heritage no less than our lakes and forests

By Suzanne Winckler

"People think we just run around outside waving litmus paper."
—Keith Lewin, scientist at Brookhaven National Laboratory

One evening when I was in New York recently there was a short and inconvenient shower right at the hour of maximum transition. It drenched a lot of people caught in between places, but as rains go it was totally unmemorable. However, since I happened to be in town talking to various people about acid rain, I gave the event more than average attention. It was as if some great chemist in the sky had decided to give me a lesson. I didn't exactly *see* anything, but at least I could extrapolate. As I walked down 44th Street, getting scant coverage from my umbrella, I repeated a scenario that various scientists, engineers, art historians, and government bureaucrats in recent weeks had patiently, earnestly told me. You might call their little parable the Woe of Gypsum.



The Statue of Liberty's wounds are caused, in part, by acid rain, which hastened the corrosion of her iron skeleton.

It goes something like this: rain falls on a marble statue. These days in many American cities rains carry a significant load of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, which makes the seemingly benign liquid acidic. In addition, the statue is often already peppered with dry particles and gases of the same oxides. The moisture and the oxides go to work on the calcite in the marble to form gypsum. (Two notes: stone researchers are not in agreement about what part the nitrogen oxides play in this reaction, but they are quite sure of the role of sulfur dioxide; they are also beginning to think that the dry oxides are more nefarious than the ones dissolved in the rain, but perhaps I'm getting a little too complicated for our purposes.) The point is that the gypsum doesn't have the integrity of marble. It either washes off, whoosh, taking with it a fine layer of the statue, or it forms a crust, usually black and warty, which in time falls off in a chunk leaving a ragged gouge. Any way you look at it, the statue is worse for wear, and the damage has accrued faster than it might under more sanguine conditions. "Normal" rain, of course, causes erosion and corrosion; the added oxides just give the rain more bite.

The issue of acid rain has bred a great deal of hyperbole, which in turn has generated enough obfuscation to darken the sun. I don't wish to cast shadows. I am not suggesting with my marble statue that the island of Manhattan is a crumbling ruin or that American cities are melting away before our eyes. They simply aren't. But certainly it is fair to look at gypsum encrustations on a statue—much as a doctor would jaundice or pallor in a patient—and view them as a symptom of a potentially crippling ailment.

Sulfur dioxide comes mainly from the burning of coal and to a lesser extent from heating and such industrial activities as the smelting of ores. The various nitrogen oxides come largely from the combustion of fuel, in utilities and vehicles, reacting with nitrogen in the air. The Clean Air Act has set emission levels for sulfur dioxide and more recently for nitrogen oxides. Nonetheless, there are raging arguments about the future increases in these emissions. Even fairly conservative thinkers

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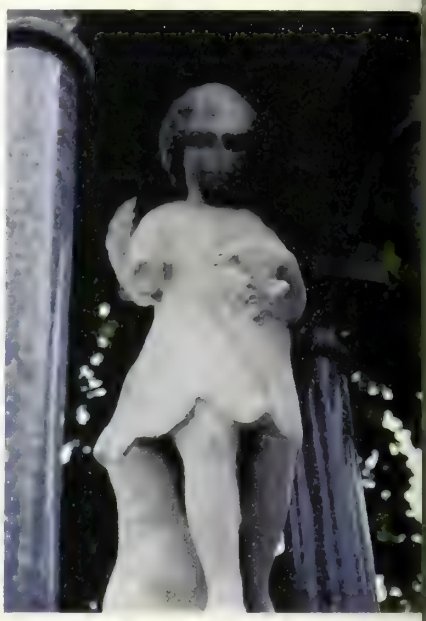


should admit that sulfur dioxide is likely to increase (without violating the Clean Air Act) because we are burning more coal, especially in the West—as will the nitrogen oxides—because more of us will be driving.

You will notice, incidentally, that the loudest fights about sulfur dioxide occur in coal-producing and -using areas like the Ohio Valley and the East Coast, while the nitrogen oxides are the compounds of contention in places like Los Angeles, where the automobile is the economic and social lubricant without which the urban engine would grind to a halt. There are also mammoth disputes between industry (mainly power producers) and environmentalists and, more importantly, between factions in Congress about whether acid rain is a local or regional phenomenon, since accountability is likely to be a factor in financing a cure for the problem. New York, for instance, a state that is doing an admirable job trying to reduce acid rain within its own boundaries, would like to see the Ohio Valley states fork over more money to clean up air that might well be drifting New York's way.

As in all things political and regulatory, to get the solution you have to pin the blame. That is why the local versus regional question is an important one; it is also why, even though there is growing concern among politicians about acid rain, legislation is stymied at present. This spring, a Senate committee passed a bill requiring reductions in sulfur dioxide emissions over the next ten years, with polluters paying up, but floor action is not expected until late in the session, if at all. In the House, a similar bill (which dealt also with nitrogen oxides emissions) was killed in committee—by a ten-to-nine vote.

This is where the marble statue comes in. It may well offer some clues as to whether acid rain is a local problem, a regional problem, or both. Or, to say it another way, whether the sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides that land on our cities come from a power plant or smelter or freeway hundreds of miles away or from a similar source on the outskirts of town. There has been a good deal of publicized research on the long-range transport of these offending oxides, one source of which are the tall stacks of coal-fired power plants. Tall stacks came into vogue in the seventies; their purpose, ironically, was environmental—to loft emissions high into the atmosphere so that they would not sully the local scene. But there is growing concern that the oxides don't all go into orbit. Some drift down instead—like invisible dry snow—close to the source of emission.



Acid rain desecrates marble
by converting the calcite to gypsum.

The marble statue is also a standard against which the 77 million of us who live in cities can measure the quality of our lives. So, assuming you agree with me that this marble statue is pretty important, who is keeping an eye on it? The formal study of acid rain in the United States is now being conducted by the Interagency Task Force on Acid Precipitation. Its budget this year is $27 million. The people under that umbrella who study such things as the formation of gypsum on marble, the durability of tombstones, and the corrosion rates of copper patina call themselves materials people. They number approximately forty and their cut of the budget is $1.5 million. It is not enough, according to some of their ranks—"Materials have been slighted by all recent administrations," says Norbert S. Baer, professor at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University—and I would have to agree. The water and land people by comparison have a budget of about $8.2 million. The research the materials people are



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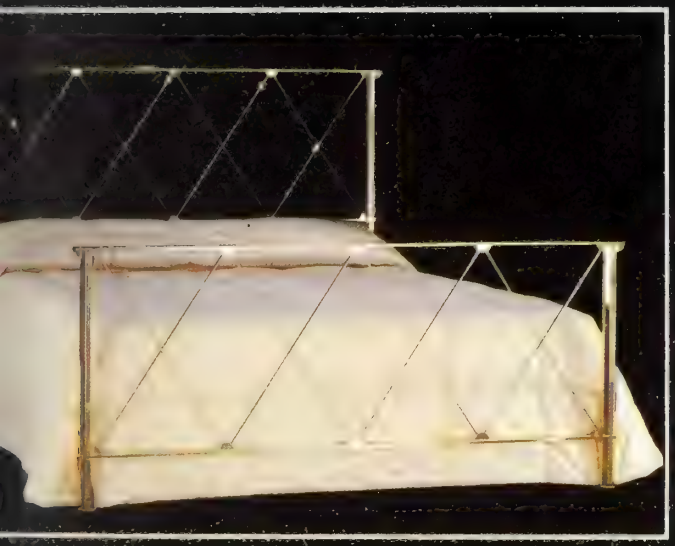
doing, while not limited just to urba areas, stands to have considerable im pact on our lives, from the amount w spend on exterior latex to whateve subliminal feelings we have from look ing at a crusty, crumbling monumen (which, granted, is a hard one to quan tify). Certainly these economic an aesthetic concerns are just as great a similar ones that pertain to our forest rivers, and lakes.

The biologists, who have been a work since long before the Task Forc was born, got a head start by followin the lead of their peers in Europe, wh have grown more and more alarmed a their declining forests and dead lakes It is nonetheless odd that in an urban intensive country (where, I might add there is considerable suspicion of na ture in general and environmentalist in particular) we are really just begin ning to look at acid rain vis-à-vis ou buildings and monuments. Message from abroad in the so-called material category have had considerable effec on archaeologists and art historian but hardly on the public at large. Per haps the most poignant came only few years ago, when Greek authoritie announced that the caryatids o Erechtheum were to be removed fron their pedestals and taken indoors. The lovely female figures had withstood the elements for 2,300 years, but in recen times the air in Athens had wreaked ir revocable damage.

If the caryatids did not make much of an impression on us, it is in part be cause we are still a young country With a few exceptions, we don't love our buildings with the same intensity that the Egyptians love the Sphinx o the Greeks love the Parthenon. And part of it is because we tend to think we can simply mend our monuments i they start to fall apart. The era of air pollution has given birth to numerous techniques (such as epoxy and acrylic treatments) for repairing stone; they have various drawbacks and, to contin ue the physician's theme, all of them treat the symptom, not the disease.

For a couple of years now, the mate rials people have been conducting some thirty projects—from monitor ing the sandstone walls and air chemis try at Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado to making a wide-ranging survey of all the outdoor statuary across the U.S. The Mesa Verde study









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which will go on for ten years (nothing happens fast in acid rain research), will be of considerable interest, first, because that site is near coal-fired power plants and, second, because it is America's first entry on the international document of cultural properties called the World Heritage List.

Their most simple and elegant study, however, is the marble tombstone inventory. It strikes me as just the kind of experiment that will shed light on the question of where acid rain is coming from. In 1979 Dr. Baer and his colleagues at NYU selected 23 national cemeteries across the country: their localities ran the gamut in terms of both atmospheric conditions and proximity to cities and industry. The team examined about four thousand headstones, measuring them for height, width, and depth of the incised inscription. Those in the best condition—some still with marble sheen on them after forty or more years of exposure—were at cemeteries in Custer, Montana, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, rural settings where the air is relatively clean and the rainfall low. Only very minor surface loss was observed at Bath, New York, and Andersonville, Georgia—rural settings with clean air where the rainfall is high. The tombstones in the worst condition were in Philadelphia and New York City—where the rain is high and on average quite acidic. More detailed studies of the air chemistries around these cemeteries are now under way, but the preliminary findings certainly look like the Woe of Gypsum.

The acid rain issue is perhaps the most complicated environmental issue to confront this country—it makes saving the whooping cranes look like child's play. The first problem is that the wafting oxides acknowledge no political boundaries. The second, and far bigger, is that freeing our air of those excess oxides will be enormously expensive. Any way you cut it, it will put a crimp in this country's shifting energy policy. We are a coal-rich nation seeking to escape from the vicissitudes of oil and gas importation. There is every indication that we are turning to coal to solve those problems: some say that by 2000 we will be mining about sixty percent more coal than we are at present, and that is a modest projection.

The more complicated the issue, however, the more we pussyfoot. The Interagency Task Force on Acid Precipitation is concluding the fourth year of its ten-year life. If its various bodies continue to do research for that period without recommending any legislation or without Congress acting on its own, we will be right on the heels of the year 2000. The task force is proceeding very cautiously. On the one hand, I admire its objective scientific approach; on the other, I wonder how minutely must we study the problem before doing something about it. If we put trust in the acid rain findings in Europe, along with preliminary discoveries here, however, then we have to admit that the expanding use of coal will present us with large problems.

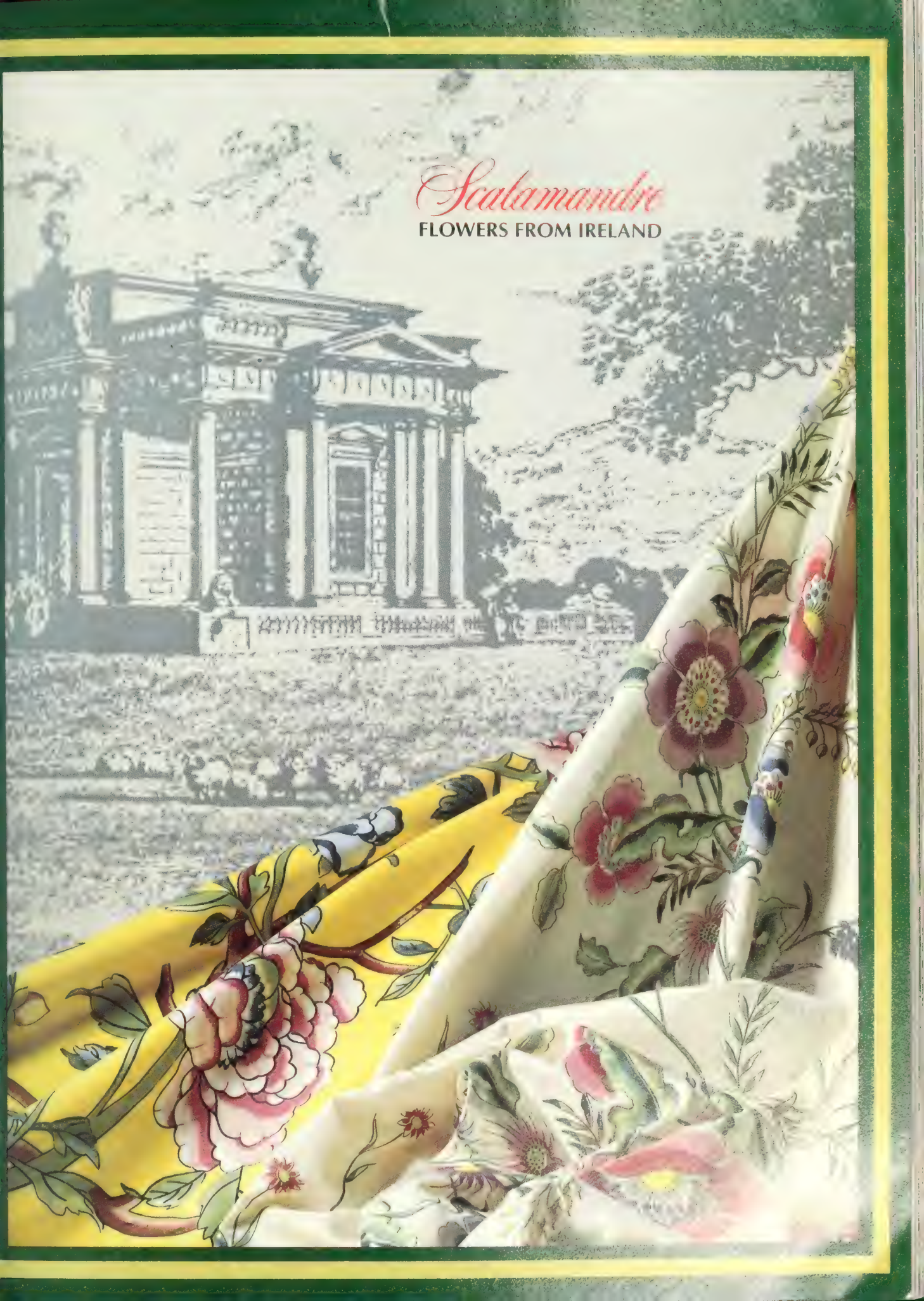
There is one monument in America that is guaranteed to move even the iciest citizen, and it is the Statue of Liberty. It does not fit at all into the Woe of Gypsum category, because it is molded from copper and iron. But it has suffered injury from acid rain too. (The acid rain, combined with the salty marine air, has begun to eat away the protective patina on her copper skin. But, of greater concern to structural engineers, it has also leaked inside. Wherever the copper and iron are in contact the deleterious rain has accelerated the corrosion of her iron skeleton.) In the realm of monuments the Statue of Liberty is the most obvious example of how much Americans love brinksmanship when it comes to the environment—we felled our forests and then thought about restoring them; we killed egrets and herons for plumes to adorn our ladies' hats and then at the last minute desisted; we pushed the whooping crane and condor right to the edge of extinction and then started reeling them back; we let the Statue of Liberty slump into New York Harbor. It is joyous that we are shoring her up, but our heritage does not rest on her shoulders alone. Consider the indecipherable name and date on the marble tombstone of a Civil War soldier buried at Cypress Hills National Cemetery in Brooklyn. Our history vanishes with his inscription. □

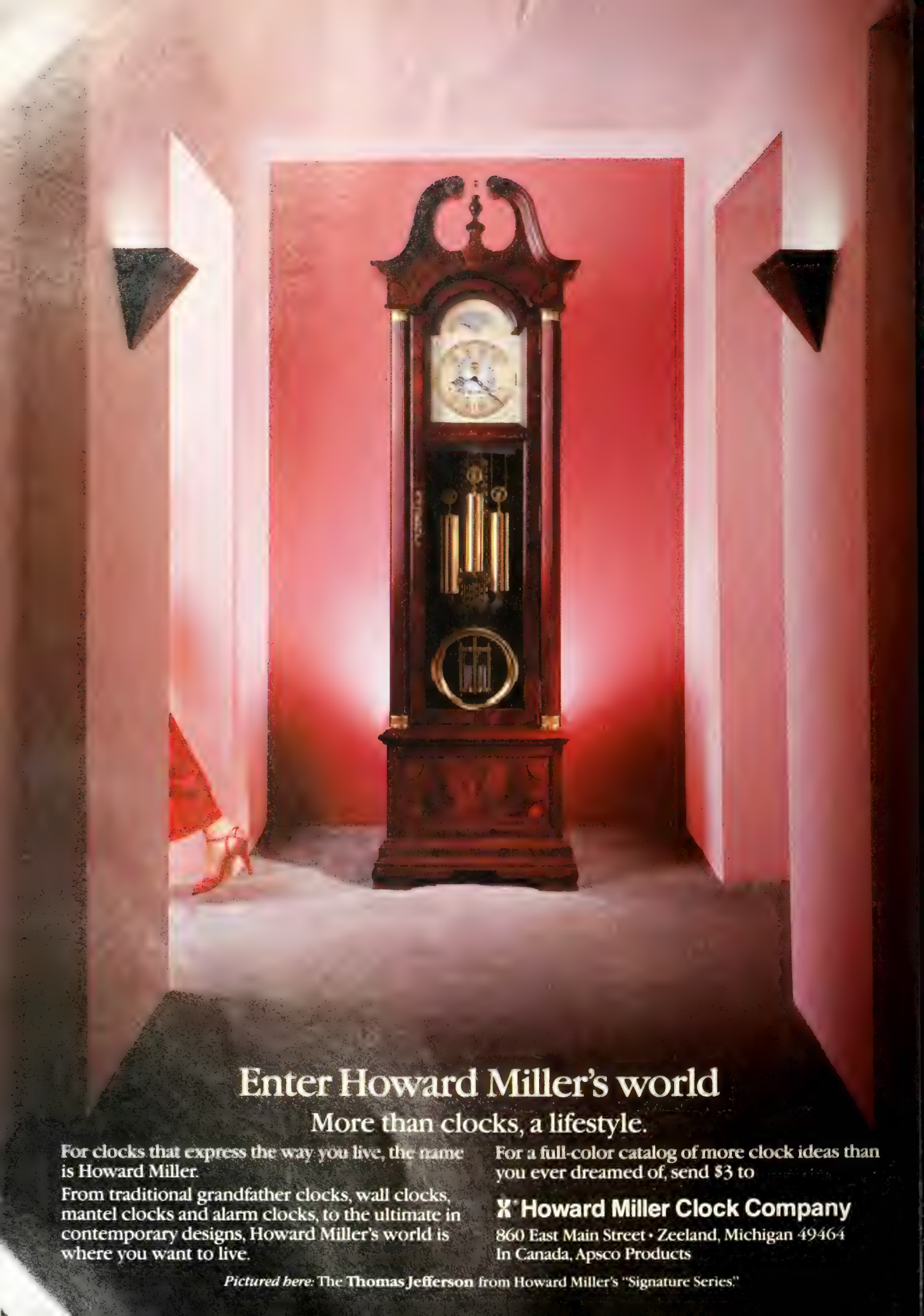
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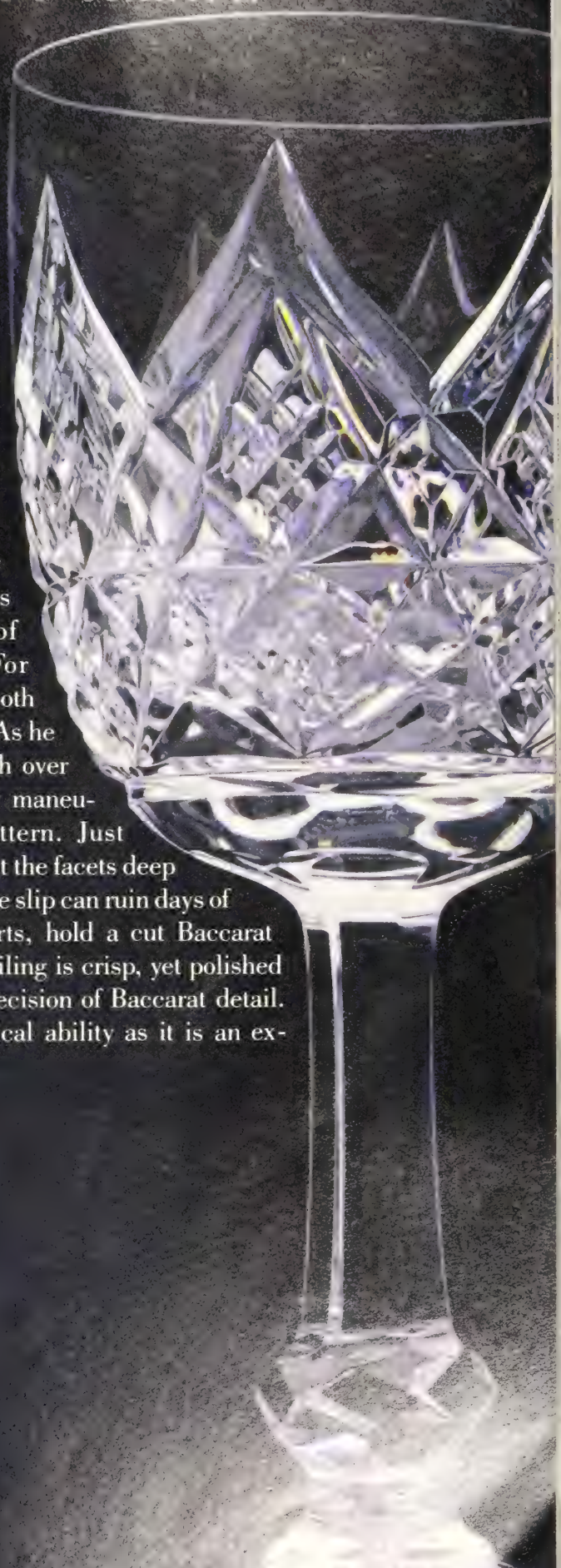
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TRYING RECIPES

Auditioning food for a new cookbook proves no way to please a guest

By Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale

"The cook was a good cook, as cooks go; and as cooks go she went," wrote Saki. The Edwardian wit could hardly have been more prophetic. Gone, indeed, are virtually all those cooks, tempestuous or docile, gifted or lackluster, starched or slovenly, who served the rich and the comfortable: those for whom "Downstairs" and "Upstairs" have become one. Cooking —now that they make their own food—has become their passion. They have joined hands with the food freak, the health-food addict, the nostalgic traveler and—dare we say the word?—gourmet. Armed with food magazines and cookbooks, which proliferate like rabbits, they storm their kitchens, hoping to surpass the virtuoso feats of professional chefs.



The authors buying vegetables at The Green Thumb in Water Mill, Long Island.

When we were asked to add to this proliferation by writing a cookbook of our own, we were delighted. What a good excuse to amuse ourselves by feeding our friends. We could retest many of our culinary inventions as well as the recipes that were given us when we interviewed the great chefs of Europe. How well we remember the noted French restaurateur who tried to explain to us the difference between *la nouvelle cuisine* and *la cuisine ancienne*! "It's chiefly a question of *les liaisons,* the thickeners used in sauces," he said with a deep air. "In the old days there was too much flour. '*Les Liaisons Dangereuses,*' I called them." Then with a quizzical glance at his American visitors he added: "That's the name of a film, you know."

Determined to show that we understood his little joke, we said: "And the name of the book as well."

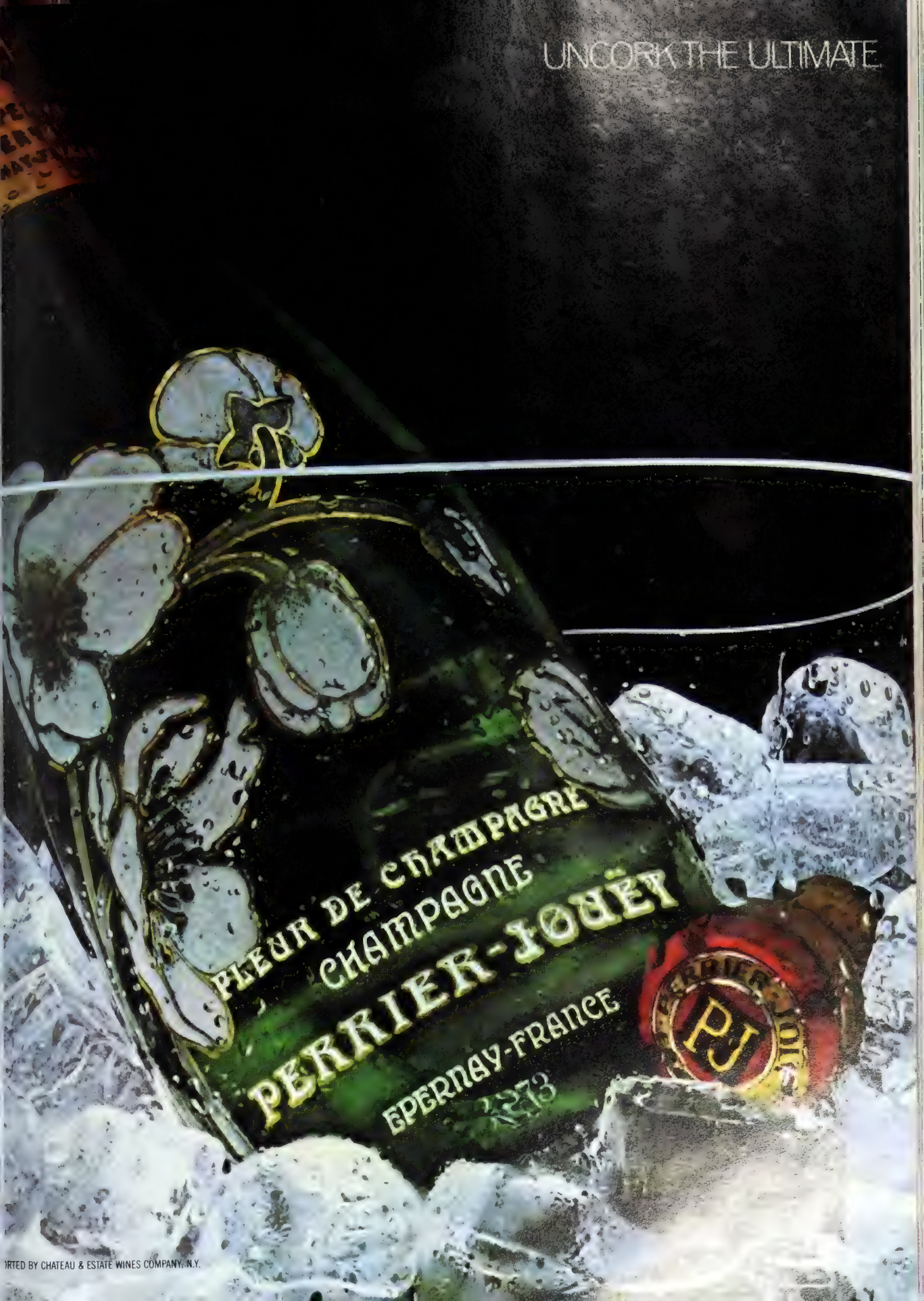
"*Ah oui*? A book?" he said, looking very doubtful. "*C'est possible.*" Passing quickly over this illuminating cultural exchange, we went on to more serious matters.

A few days later we made an unforgettable visit to Paul Bocuse. A big, hearty, engagingly theatrical man, he offered to make the omelets his grandmother had taught him when he was a child prodigy of the kitchen. His minions, not used to the sight of *le patron* actually cooking, hovered at a respectful distance. The eggs were whisked in an instant. The butter sizzled in the pan. The mixture was stirred with a fork; the pan smartly banged, then tilted. In thirty seconds the omelet was ready.

"You must melt a spoonful of butter in the pan for *la dorure,* the gilding," he explained. "And when you turn the omelet out onto a dish, rub it with some cold butter stuck on the tip of a knife. That's *le vernissage,* the varnishing. Like a great painting in a gold frame, an omelet should be gilded and varnished. Practice makes perfect."

Even as he was telling us exactly how it should be done, the man considered by many to be the greatest chef in the world found his omelets stubbornly sticking to the pan. He had trouble turning them out, and when he did they were far from perfect. With an uneasy glance at his numerous *sous-chefs,* who had discreetly lowered their eyes, he muttered: "*Merde alors*! I'm out of practice! It's been a long time since I've actually made an omelet." But then, miracle of miracles, Bocuse turned disaster into triumph as only a truly great chef can. He quickly covered each somewhat ragged omelet with a linen towel, patted it deftly, then whipped off the towel to reveal the most perfect-looking omelets imaginable. And the most delicious! His grandmother would have been proud of him.

As our book began to take shape our friends bombarded us with the inevitable questions. Does it have a theme? A gimmick? Are the recipes easy or complicated? Salt-free, *nouvelle,* or low-cal? Vegetarian or ethnic? None of these, was our answer. We were simply going to write about the food that they had professed to enjoy, at our table—

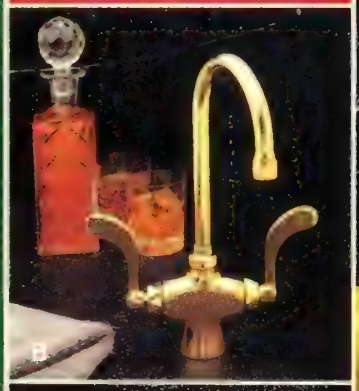


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in a word, the home-cooking of Gold and Fizdale. Irrepressible hosts, we could not imagine testing and retesting countless recipes without inviting them to sample the results. If a dish had them shouting bravo, or better still, asking for the recipe, it was included in our book. If there were no requests for seconds, it was out.

Of course there were frustrating moments. As soon as we told our dinner guests that we were writing a cookbook, even those who normally arrived unbelievably late would turn up inexcusably early to watch each step of the preparation. Now nothing disturbs us more than people hanging about when we cook. It is rather like trying to meditate in the subway. And while our country kitchen is large enough to hold a table for twelve and a grand piano, it did seem rather small when eight or ten people crowded in, drinks in hand, to watch us in operation. Their favorite vantage point was leaning on the stove or sink; their preferred pastime, opening the refrigerator to see what was in it; their constant refrain: "What can we do to help?"

Our reply: "Would you open the wine?" seemed to bore them. They dawdled over their drinks. They fixed themselves another round. They stuck their fingers in the pots. They tasted. There was too much pepper for Jules, too little salt for Jim. But it was never until the moment of truth, when the *beurre blanc* or some equally delicate maneuver demanded all our concentration, that a last-minute appeal for the corkscrew was finally heard—invariably followed by: "I can't get this one to work. Don't you have a better one?"

When everything was ready and we asked our guests to take their places at table, there was the troubled friend who lingered behind to say that his wife had just left him the day after he'd broken off with the mistress he'd promised to give up six months earlier! And what was he supposed to do now? Our peevish "Why don't you just go to the table," was met by a reproachful look that would have been more appropriate for Caesar's last glance at Brutus. In the confusion all thought of writing down the precise amounts of tarragon and chopped shallots was abandoned. We could only delude ourselves into thinking we would remember what we'd done in the morning. But when morning came it was only too evident that we must cook the whole meal again (with no helpful friends present we could write everything down carefully) and give the food to the maid.

"How did your husband like the *Veau Catalan aux Marrons Secs*?" we asked the next day. "Oh, just fine. He *wondered* what it was." When we explained the intricacies of poaching the dried chestnuts in saffron-scented consommé and finding exactly the right Spanish *chorizos,* she looked more sibylline than usual. "The only thing my husband really likes is steak and potatoes. But that's okay. As long as he's got his ketchup and his pickles he'll eat practically anything."




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Still, hers was a more tolerant attitude than that of the French diplomat and his wife who came to one of our "testing" dinners later that week. "There is nothing we do not eat," they told us when we invited them to our kitchen-laboratory, "after all, we have lived in every part of the world." Reassured by the prospect of feeding such cosmopolitan guinea pigs, we prepared what we naïvely thought was a perfect menu. Bay scallops in pastry shells, their pastry initials serving as edible place cards, would surely amuse them. To follow, an elaborate *blanquette* of lobster tails in steamed cucumber boats and mushroom caps stuffed with puréed fennel. Even the beets in the beet and arugula salad had been slowly baked to ensure maximum flavor.

To gild the lily we had prepared our favorite orange tart, a time-consuming task but well worth the effort. The orange segments, carefully trimmed of all traces of membrane and pith; the rind, finely julienned and glazed in a Cointreau syrup; the freshly baked crisp sugar crust lined with toasted chopped hazelnuts—all would be assembled at the last minute so that each ingredient retained its textural integrity.

As we sat down Héloïse said: "I thought of calling you this morning to tell you that we are both allergic to shellfish but Abélard thought it unnecessary."

"It does pose a bit of a problem," we confessed, whisking away the scallops and turning off the oven where the lobster was keeping warm, "but we can offer you an omelet, some salad, and a rather nice dessert."

"Our doctor does not permit us to eat eggs. *Trop de cholestérol,* you know," said Abélard, while Héloïse muttered gloomily: "We gave up desserts years ago."

All evidence of our hours of preparation was quickly removed. Our guests seemed fairly content to have *spaghetti al burro* and salad, although Héloïse rather ostentatiously left her beets on the plate. They refused coffee—they never touched it—and left quite early, headed, no doubt, for the nearest hamburger joint. As they departed, they said with faultless diplomacy: "We are sure your cookbook will be a great success. Everything you make sounds so original." □



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WHAT REVIVALS REVEAL

Every time it reappears, the Classical tradition teaches us something new

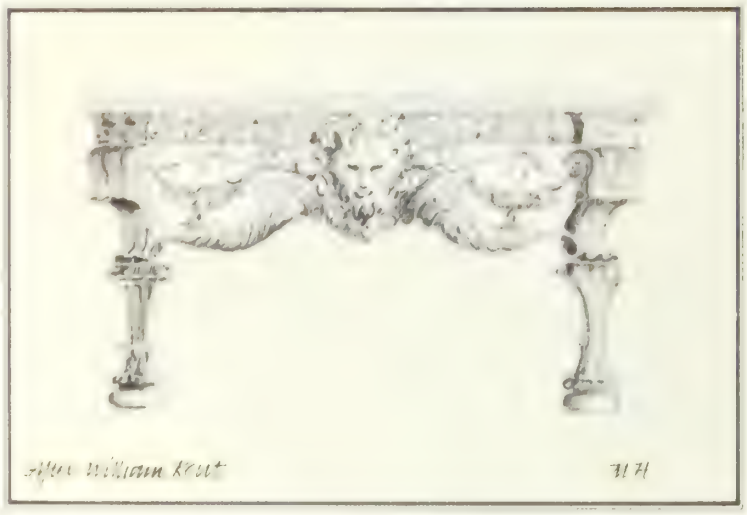
By Mark Hampton

Decoration, like architecture, has been enlivened with great regularity by revivals of a classicizing nature. To deal with all of them, in fact even to list all of them, is well beyond the scope of these paragraphs. But several of them have influenced subsequent generations of architects and designers and have actually changed the way we see things.

Palladio is a household word. He must be one of the most famous architects in history. In the sixteenth century he designed a number of buildings that to this day are a source of inspiration and reference to architects and designers everywhere. It is always fascinating to contemplate the achievement of Palladio and the gigantic effect he has had over the past four hundred years. The beauty of his buildings is easy to perceive. Less easy for us to weigh is his dazzling originality and boldness and the impact these qualities had on his contemporaries, an impact that must have been enormous. He was, for instance, the first architect to take what looks like the portico of a Roman temple and put it on the front of a house. This device alone has supplied architects with a seemingly inexhaustible source of ideas. One hundred years later (it is easy to forget how close in time they were), Inigo Jones applied some of his new knowledge about Palladio to buildings and additions to buildings in seventeenth-century England. A century after that, a whole community of architects and decorators had turned their passion for Palladio into a strict school of architecture. I cannot think of anything as long-lasting as that movement. By the middle of the eighteenth-century, however, Pompeii and Herculaneum had been exposed to view, and another electrifying wave of Classicism was charging through drafting rooms and drawing rooms. Again, what made the new Classical Revival so vigorous was not its ability to draw on detailed archaeological references. It was the originality and the brilliant reapplication of the new material that inspired professionals and their clients forever after. Robert Adam, after all, lent his name to a style just as Palladio had done. In addition to Adam and his family, there were endless architects who worked in the same style. Originality was not at an end either. Sir John Soane's unique vision resulted in a body of work that, like Palladio's, drew on sources similar to those of his contemporaries but that were amazingly original and that helped pave the way for still another classical mania—the Greek Revival. By the 1840s, every farming town in America, not to mention major cities, had a bank or a house or a church tha was a tiny replica of the Parthenon.

Starting in the eighteenth century revival architects added a twist to thei work that has left us with an extra heri tage, one that has a practical as well a decorative use. They designed an made furniture. I migh add that some of then designed almost any thing they could ge their hands on, fron watch fobs to carriages Classical Revival furni ture designed by archi tects, especially when i was designed for a par ticular spot in a specifi room, takes on a whol interest that furniture intended for mass pro duction often lacks Not that the designs i the famous cabinet maker's manuals ar boring; there is a differ ence, however, in con cept, and the marvelous thing about a lot of this architect-de signed furniture is that it has a boldnes of scale and ornamentation that places it in a decorative category all its own Although it was designed to be seen *e suite* with closely related architectura details, this big, assertive furniture is paradoxically, often perfect in twenti eth-century rooms, especially rooms that lack the very architectural details that inspired it in the first place. The ta bles, cabinets, pedestals, and urns tha began to appear in the 1720s are so packed with architectural references that they can help fill the characterless spaces that are such a problem in newly built apartments and houses.

Palladian houses of the sixteenth century were, of course, filled with Renaissance furniture. When the Georgian followers of Palladio were



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faced with the problem of furnishing their houses, they turned to Italianate motifs for inspiration, and the result was often original to the point of bizarreness. And it was almost always wonderfully rich and complicated. William Kent (1685–1748) was a "painter, architect, and the father of modern gardening," in Horace Walpole's words. The furniture he designed as well as the furniture he inspired has a lush quality that gives any room an atmosphere of luxury. It is also often rather eccentric to our eyes. His gigantic console tables are composed of scrolls and swags and masks and shells and even complete figures carved in the round, sitting on the stretchers not in order to support the tops but apparently just to take a rest. Surfaces are covered with superb carving. His chairs and settees, rarer than his tables, have great foliate motifs that wrap around the legs and backs and sometimes simply become the legs. At other times, the better part of a loin will be pressed into service in order to hold up the seat of a chair.

Kent's more conservative furniture—mahogany rather than paint or gilt, and smaller in scale—consists of a wealth of secretaries and bookcases that have, as their chief ornamentation, pediments and columns and pilasters. Occasionally, a cabinet may be a scaled-down version of an almost complete building, starting with a rusticated base, and ending with a pedimented attic story resting on a complete entablature with minutely carved columns. The great appeal of this furniture lies not only in its beauty per se but also in its perfect scaling: a small secretary is short as well as narrow and its ornamentation is equally reduced in size. Details on small pieces are minute.

Robert Adam (1728–92) was the son of a Scottish architect. He was clearly a genius in the realm of drawing and designing. In the 1750s he went to Rome. For the next three years, he traveled and studied and made copious notebooks of drawings. His book on Diocletian's palace in Spalato, in what is now Yugoslavia, was the result of this tour. So was the inspiration for the rest of his life's work. From the time he returned to England and set up shop in London in 1758, until his death 34 years later, he created designs for furniture in a Neoclassical style that have continued to inspire furniture makers

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with few interruptions ever since. The thoroughness of Adam's architectural conceptions is remarkable. A house designed by him gives, from the moment your foot touches the step and your hand grasps the iron railing, the impression of a complete integration of decoration and architecture. The balusters of the railing you hold, the lanterns overhead, the doorknob and the carving around the door are all composed from the same design lexicon used for the architecture itself. Once inside, you find that this application of design motifs continues throughout. I do not mean to imply that I find it monotonous, although some do, of course. That, however, is not the point. The effect that Adam had on furniture design is what interests us and what is responsible for the world's great supply of Adam-style furniture.

Try, if you can, to forget the connotations that the words "Adam Style" usually bring to mind—the dinky plaster-of-Paris medallions and swags pasted on mass-produced mantels, or Wedgwood plaques incorporated into sconces. The Age of Plastic has to be put aside for a minute. Think instead of the big tables decorated with beautifully carved ram's heads and acanthus leaves. Lanterns with swags of bronze bellflowers and leafy palmettes. Pedestals and urns painted and carved with dentils, eggs and darts, and more beautiful fluting. All the same motifs cover mirrors and chairs as well, and most of this enormous body of furniture is perfectly useful in our own rooms today. That, finally, is the point with all this architectural, Neoclassical furniture—the fact that it is so easy to use in such a variety of decorative backgrounds.

Two common categories of rooms are familiar to us all. One is the watered-down Georgian Revival room, whether it is a hall, a living room, or a dining room. It exists everywhere. Houses and apartment buildings built over the past eighty years are full of rooms, often decently proportioned, usually with ceilings that are a little too low, and for the most part lacking any interesting architectural detail. The other common category, and one that will probably continue far into the future, is the newly built room with simply no architectural detail whatsoever. Using overscale furniture and decorative elements is not treacherous. It just requires a little advance planning. You obviously need an empty wall, and that wall should have a certain centrality about it. In theory, you should also not have already bought a piece of furniture for the wall in question. We are not talking about pieces that can just be scooted around anywhere. Large entrance halls provide any number of possibilities. A big table, a pair of pedestals, a mirror or two. Mirrors in halls give particular pleasure because of the frequent lack of windows. This is especially true of apartment houses. There is, of course, the extra advantage of being able to smooth your hair or straighten your tie. The same big table that you could use in a large hall would also provide a dramatic focal point in a living room, opposite the fireplace for example, or between a pair of windows. Instead of putting a sofa on the obvious long wall, consider using an imposing piece of real furniture. If there is no fireplace, all the more reason to start the design of the room around something big and rather grand. And if your room is really huge, anchor the whole thing down with a center table or a library table, as many of the great eighteenth-century desks were called. Funnily enough, the excessive richness that frightens so many people where rococo furniture is concerned is not a problem




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with Neoclassical furniture. And Kent-style furniture, although very rich, has a muscular quality that prevents it from looking too precious.

Equally flexible are large bookcases. I stress the flexibility of this furniture due to the fact that people often shy away from one piece or another because they are afraid to buy something that would be a problem in a future room. Bookcases, however, belong in any number of rooms. How they ever got turned into china cupboards, I will never know. Filled with books, they lend great atmosphere to any hall or living room, to say nothing of an anonymous room that you want to turn into a library. If you must line them with silk and fill them with dessert plates, so be it. They still give height and scale to a large wall.

Collections of contemporary art and sculpture are not a difficulty, either, when combined with large-scale, architectural furniture. A great side table standing under a large modern canvas



Classical anchor for a modern space: a carpet designed by Robert Adam in a living room decorated by Mica Ertegun of Mac II.

looks comfortable with a piece o sculpture on it or a large vase of flow ers. Or nothing. A small table needs, i order to justify its existence in a room something on it. Large, sculptural ta bles, however, lead lives of their own. was recently in a room hung entirel with twentieth-century pictures. O one large wall, there was a very big— probably eighty inches long—mahog any side table with a thick white marbl top and deep apron carved with typica Adamesque paterae and fluting. A Ma gritte hung over the table and a Calde stabile stood on top of it. Flanking i were a pair of rather tall pedestals, als decorated with fluting and paterae an still in their old paint. On the pedestal were a pair of Regency lamps in th form of standing Grecian ladies. Th whole arrangement was both beautifu and interesting as well as being some what original without straining one credulity.

Carpets were another fabulous cre ation of Neoclassical designers. The were filled with the same motifs tha were used on furniture of the sam period, and as we all know they wer frequently designed to echo th plasterwork on the ceilings of th rooms they were intended for. The or derly, rather geometric arrangement o their patterns once again suits them fo rooms of a contemporary nature. Th coloring of these carpets is often re freshingly vivid, but at the same tim the colors are so plentiful that you wil find them very unconfining vis-à-vi the selection of materials and pain colors.

As the Post-Modernist style devel ops before our very eyes, it is rather ex citing to contemplate what might be i store for us. More architects seem to b returning to the delights of the past fo inspiration and taking up designin furniture. Meanwhile, as yet anothe movement inspired by Neoclassicisn gains in popularity, those of us wh long to live with antiques can look for ward to new ways to use them and nev surroundings in which to see them. Fi nally, it is wonderfully encouraging t be reminded of the fact that the worl of design is never static. There are al ways at least two alternatives to th present. One is the past, and the othe is the future. □

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BY CHRISTINA DE LIAGRE
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Jules Hardouin-Mansart staircase leads to Gaston Berthelot's *étage noble* of 1707. *Opposite:* The antechamber, with its original truffled floor, where Berthelot paints.

Making the rounds of concierges in Paris to find a place to live has solved more than one housing dilemma. But walking into the Place des Vosges and finding something available—in fact one of the most spectacular apartments on the entire square—borders on the miraculous.

Though back in 1964, when Gaston Berthelot stepped into the picture, *l'étage noble* at the top of the seventeenth-century Mansart staircase appeared to be anything but that. There was no enfilade to be seen, no endless vista of rooms through double sets of double doors. What had once been a hypnotic succession of spacious chambers—the private quarters of the duc de Chaulnes—had become a rabbit warren of storage rooms for *souvenirs de Paris*—miniature chamber pots with the Eiffel Tower painted at the bottom. This had been the grandest residence of them all, the Hôtel de Chaulnes, run by a staff of 169, not to mention additional labor provided by a team of donkeys—whose daily go-round in the courtyard pumped water up to fountains on the first floor.

After centuries of disrepair (nobility left the area in the eighteenth century to move to the faubourgs St. Germain and St. Honoré), it was still a gamble whether the Place des Vosges would again become what it once was: one of the most fashionable sites in town and the architectural showpiece of the Marais district. (It was in the Marais that the typical *hôtel particulier* or French city mansion began to appear, flanked by entrance court and geometrical garden, with its distinctive stonework, wrought iron, high windows, and sweeping staircases.)

Staking a claim in such an uncertain quarter was clearly in keeping with Berthelot's pioneer spirit. In the sixties, as a young stylist he fast became one of France's most notable exports to the new world of New York, where he was artistic director for the House of Dior. Returning to Paris triumphant—summoned to take over the House of Chanel after Mademoiselle died—he later opted to answer another call from within: painting full time in his light-filled apartment. "There has also always been time for Tunisia," says Berthelot, whose other, seaside life in Hammamet is the source of many of his inspirations.

Here, on the Right Bank, in the center of Paris, one gets the eerie feeling of being halfway to Tunisia—"like Palermo, or someplace less obvious," he adds. "It's bringing the south up north. That was the idea of the Place des Vosges really. There was Hispano-mania at the period of Louis XIII—everyone threw Spanish words into the conversation. The Place des Vosges is Spain arriving by way of the







In the second reception room, a Restoration table sits under five chandeliers hanging from Louis XIV period ceiling. The architect's table is Louis XVI, *secrétaire* is Louis Philippe, a pre household [illegible] Louis XVI [illegible] Louis XVI [illegible]



A painting by Berthelot is flanked by Napoleon III oil lamps from a street market in Aix, on Neopolitan church furniture passing as consoles. In between the amaryllis is a modern Murano imitation of a classical urn. Torso is plaster from *Ateliers du Louvre*.

north, from Holland really—because the style of using bricks comes from Holland and Holland was Spanish and the Queen of France was Spanish."

Southern exposure is the keynote in Gaston Berthelot's seemingly endless enfilade of rooms. "I think of this as an eighteenth-century *maison solaire,*" says Berthelot, whose Breton blue eyes match his faded jeans. "It's like a greenhouse, facing south this way. Even in the winter there is no need to turn on the heat until late in the afternoon. That is why they built these six-meter-high ceilings. Even if it's not sunny, the radiation works because of the high windows."

The first room is now Berthelot's studio. ("It was originally a sort of public room where hangers-on waited for handouts and favors," he points out with an accent from the Charles Boyer school of English.) There are no curtains. Carved wood shutters, all original, serve the same purpose—shutting cold out and privacy in. Wanting the room to be austere in feeling, Berthelot has created a look that is elegant but rustic, with slipcovered Louis XIII chairs and a deer's head over the door adding "a squirely air." "Like a country château," he continues. "Not a



Berthelot's paints, rags, and books are on the Napoleon III desk. Plaster column is marbleized to match baseboards and *ver de mer* of mantel. Lantern is one of two made in New York after sketches by Berthelot. Cast-iron vases Médicis on mantel with lights in them were used on tombs.

grand one, it should be considered sort of *nouveau pauvre*!"

Moving into the second reception room ("it's an entrance too and should look like the one where you let in more important people") the tones are darker, cozier. The walls are now red ocher instead of yellow, explained by a desire "to bring the outside in."

The colors of the houses in the south of France, and the palaces in Italy and Spain—faded from the sun and washed in the rain—are the hues that Berthelot wanted to capture in his rooms.

A summer-house feeling is everywhere in large part due to sheeting (half cotton, half linen) thrown over most of the furniture. The sheeting has created a unity of style out of pieces described by Berthelot as a "hodgepodge of different periods—some good, some not so good.

"I first hit on the idea of using sheeting as a way to protect original needlepoint on a pair of Louis XIII chairs. I'm afraid I'm not up to Joan Crawford. She always had everything covered in clear plastic!"

Berthelot's haphazard accumulation of furniture over the years—literally *(Text continued on page 245)*









Another view of second reception room, *opposite,* with stools or *tabourets de duchesse* covered in sheeting. *Top left:* A 19th-century terra-cotta bust of Madame de Lomballe, Marie Antoinette's *confidante* who was beheaded on the neighboring rue du Pas de la Mule. *Top right:* Reclining bull crèche figure. *Above:* On the Louis-Philippe *secrétaire* are a pair of Florentine alabaster obelisks, vase Médicis painted beige and filled with Tunisian ceramic fruit, 1921 American candlesticks, and a tiny bust of Schubert.



A view of the *petit salon*, where behind a silver-gilt a court stool sit Tunisian faïence ducks and a 17th-century *fontaine* used for wine on a demilune cherrywood country table.
Opposite: Louis XVI trumeau with Louis XV appliques against a *faux marbre* chintz from Mira-X.

THE HOUSE WITHIN

Architect George Woo adds many layers of form and function to a thirties Texas colonial

BY ELAINE GREENE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BALTHAZAR KORAB



The principal view from the open-air patio and pool, *right,* is the surrounding three-wing house, its original core seen as the large red mass in the center. *Left:* In this color-coded house, red was chosen for the social spaces, including the stair in the new entry.









A play balcony, *opposite,* adjoins son Alex's bedroom in the old part of the house. Alex and friends are trained not to climb, but throwing toys overboard is irresistible. *Above:* Inside looking out to the short wing that leads to George Woo's office. *Above right:* Bar and counter against the old cottage's back wall help hosts entertain at poolside ten months of the year. Insulating glass walls face north and east; ceiling fans assist air conditioning.

With the patience often required of someone married to an architect, Elizabeth Woo lived for almost a decade in the all-white rooms her husband designed, using the Mies and Breuer furniture he chose. And when the couple visited other young architects, they gathered in rooms she found "almost identical." George Woo smilingly acknowledges these hardships of the past.

The white style persisted during the Woos' tenure in a New York City brownstone and during their first years in a small thirties colonial-garrison revival house in a comfortable suburban enclave near downtown Dallas, where George Woo's job with I.M. Pei & Partners had taken them. They bought the adequate but ordinary cottage for its agreeable, mature neighborhood, its huge front-yard oak tree, and its 175-foot-deep lot, which held great promise for future expansion.

Expansion time came with the arrival of the Woos' young son, and Liz Woo's patience was rewarded when her husband designated her his client. Her special requirements were two. She said, "I want color, color to make us feel happy, no more sophisticated white." And as a nature-loving California native who works all day in a viewless room marketing computers, she said, "I want to see green leaves and sky and weather all the time that I am inside the house." This her husband accomplished and he even gave her the moon, which they can watch from its rising to its setting.

Woo added 4,000 square feet to the 1,400 he began with, and he did it without violating the original design as seen from the street. To the three-bay, two-and-a-half-story structure with center entry, he added two more bays on the right side. Re-



Standing on the stair to the top floor, which is devoted to storage and drafting rooms, one sees how the grid works inside and out. At right are the old upstairs windows and an edge of Alex's balcony. *Right:* The new dining room occupies the old living room's space. Wall of old fireplace was punched through to also serve the adjoining new living room. Table designed by the architect. The Woos collect rubbings of ancient Chinese carved stone calligraphy.





George Woo and his associates work at the end of the long wing farthest from the street, *left*. The space is designed to become a visiting grandparents' suite when the office moves downtown. *Below:* The street façade, with the much-admired oak. *Right:* The new living room containing the couple's newlywed furniture is small because patio and family/music rooms are utilized far more. Papier-mâché pear by Ming Fay, a New York friend.

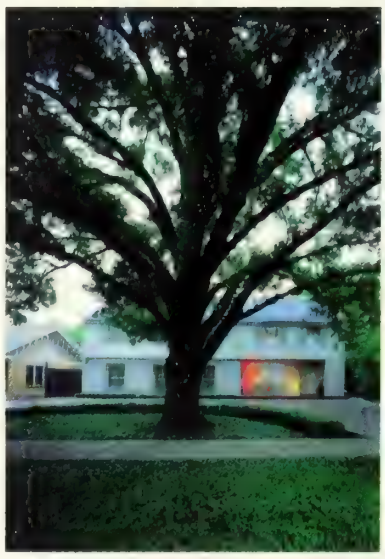
placing the original center door with a window matching the two that flanked it, the architect placed the new entrance in the addition, recessed four and a half feet behind the plane of the old façade. He leads the eye to the door with the only bold note seen by a passer-by: a curved wall of glass block that only hints at the surprises within.

Entering the house is, in the words of Dallas architecture critic David Dillon, the "equivalent of cracking a geode." The door closes behind; the sun-baked street and modest façade are forgotten in an explosive interior that is simultaneously cool, brilliant, soaring, sheltering, straight-edged, swelling, old, new.

The plan is a C-shape with right-angle corners, the old house incorporated into the bottom leg. The "C" embraces a large open-air patio with pool, flanked on the fourth side by a tall cedar fence behind a garden border.

The old house still functions: kitchen and small dining room as renovated when the Woos first moved in; old living room made into a new dining room, which a new living room and entry hall adjoin. Upstairs, the three old bedrooms remain, two of them opening to a new children's play balcony over the new living room. The balcony's grand-piano form is one of the important curved masses that contrast

(Text continued on page 258)









POLISHED PAVILION

Waldo Fernandez took the big view when he designed his small hillside retreat

BY MARGARET MORSE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUSSELL MACMASTERS

Around a sandstone table designed by Fernandez stand antique chinoiserie bamboo chairs, echoed by living bamboos in huge jars. A Roman portrait head presides, stationed between mirrored bath and kitchen. Cantilevered staircase is seen from behind, its chrome handrail hidden from view. The steps are sandstone boxes, sand-filled to sound comfortably solid when climbed.





By profession Waldo Fernandez decorates large houses and creates overscaled furniture for his Los Angeles firm, Waldo's Designs, but at home he has developed a preference for living small. He found a breathtaking place to display his private style: a narrow strip of land with a high sweeping view of Los Angeles. A small house stood on the site and Fernandez stripped it down to the skeleton to build his way. He placed the pool on the same long axis as the house on a cypress-planted terrace that reminds guests of Provence. The shoebox-shaped structure is all of three major rooms—a dining room downstairs, media room and master bedroom above. Big windows open the long wall facing the city and the side wall overlooking the garden but the poolside façade with its pair of narrow doors is as mysterious as an ancient tomb. A few choice pieces furnish the rooms.

Sandstone floor tile and smooth wall finishes—stucco outside, plaster within—give an austere grandeur to the small house. At night the distant lights of Los Angeles sparkle below, bringing to mind architect Charles Moore's contention that a plot of land seems only as small as its view. □ *Editor: Joyce MacRae*

A full level below the house, a loggia, *opposite above,* is shaded by the pool deck. *Above:* A fierce painting by Basquiat shakes up the serene dining room. *Opposite below:* Another calculated contrast is the juxtaposition of chased frame and gilded console (both Venetian) with uncut geodes and Japanese crackleware. *Right:* The architecture of Luis Barragán inspired the stark house and swimming pool, which ends in whirlpool bath. The building contractor was Anders Swanstrom; the source for the contemporary furniture, Waldo's Designs.



IF YOU KNEW SUZY...

Her seductive New York apartment reflects the glamorous world she chronicles

BY STEVEN M. L. ARONSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELICIANO



Aileen Mehle, *left,* wearing a Pauline Trigère in a portrait by Eric Boman, lies among the tasseled cushions on the day bed at the far end of the drawing room, once her ballroom of the house. *Opposite:* The place in the drawing room where everyone sits, opposite the large crystal chandelier. Needlepoint rug was made in Portugal especially for the room.

Ask her to pick a week—a typical week, any one out of fifty-two. Last week, next week. Next year, last year.

"Well, Sunday I'm going to a black-tie dinner for Philip Johnson at the Four Seasons that Jacqueline Onassis is co-chairing for the Municipal Art Society; then Monday there's the Saint Laurent dinner at the Metropolitan Museum to benefit its Costume Institute; there's cocktails the next day at Nancy and Hank Luce's, and that's also the "Night of One Hundred Dinners" benefit for the New York Public Library, and the one *I'm* going to is at the Knickerbocker Club where Mica Ertegun, Chessy Rayner, and Annette Reed—the Three Graces—are giving a dinner dance, black-tie, very festive, la-dee-*da;* then the next day, which would be Wednesday, I have to go to a special board meeting of Revlon, where I'm the only woman on the board, and after that there's a cocktail party at the William A. M. Burdens', which I'll have to



leave at 6:15 to go to the Spanish Institute for a very small private reception for King Juan Carlos and Queen Sophía of Spain, and then Mr. and Mrs. Prentis Cobb Hale are giving a dinner at Le Cirque for Henry McIlhenny of the Philadelphia McIlhennys; on Thursday the R. Thornton Wilsons are having a cocktail party at their apartment on Sutton Place, and then there's a dinner for Yves Saint Laurent at Mortimer's given by Vicomtesse Jacqueline de Ribes or, should I say, by Jacqueline, Vicomtesse de Ribes, who as you know is in town for all the festivities; and then the next night Mary Lasker is giving a dinner dance at La Grenouille in honor of Baron and Baroness Guy de Rothschild. And now we're through Friday."

These are the duties she is expected to perform every night during an average week, emphasizes the blue-eyed, ash-blond, exquisitely feminine presence whose working clothes are evening gowns. Who *is* this woman working in the glamour mines, positively toiling in the shafts of shameless plenty?

Her name is Aileen Mehle, but she is known to millions simply as "Suzy," the world's premier society columnist. She doesn't think of herself as a social arbiter in the old sense of the term, like Ward McAllister, whose definitive list of society, the "Four Hundred" (actually it numbered little more than three hundred, including himself), earned him the sobriquet "Mr. Make-a-Lister." Or like Maury Paul, the first Cholly Knickerbocker, who coined the term "Café Society," inventing a world so recherché that it satisfied the dreams not only of shopgirls and other outsiders but of society itself.

"I'm definitely not an arbiter," Aileen Mehle insists. "I'm an editor, basically. I edit before I even start my column. If I think somebody's out, I just don't put them in." Today, of course, society is free-form, and Suzy writes not *(Text continued on page 242)*



The drawing room's 19th-century paneling and 18th-century fireplace were imported from France by the Sloane family, who built the house around 1914.







A round table set for two, which, when not used for dining, has flowers and objects on it. Plates, glasses, and serving dishes are from James Robinson, James II, and Earle D. Vandekar; napkins from Frette.

A POET'S PLACE IN PROVENCE

BY
SIR STEPHEN SPENDER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
DENNIS STOCK



To run in a new car, my wife Natasha and I set off in the early summer of 1960 to explore the southwestern corner of Provence. We spent our second evening at a hotel in Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, overlooking the reeds and willows of the bank of the Rhône opposite Avignon. Across the moving dark waters of the river we could see, golden by floodlight, the walls and towers of the Palais des Papes. It was the Tennysonian dusk that first made us fall in love with Provence.

Long before this a friend had told me that owing to the postwar movement of the population from partly derelict rural

areas into the towns in that part of France, it was possible to buy houses abandoned and falling into ruin, even whole villages, for what is called a "song." The French were pleased at the idea of foreign visitors putting back the stones of their ruins. Natasha and I scarcely thought about this, assuming that, as usual, we had arrived too late. This proved indeed almost the case when, three years later, on what was now an annual tour of Provence, she pointed out to me a ruin standing at the edge of a corkscrew bend halfway up the hillside



Sir Stephen and Lady Spender with the table set for lunch at their *mas, center,* near St. Rémy.

near the village of Maussane-les-Alpilles, with its enormous view down the valley and across the plain to Arles and far beyond. This was the dream ruin she would like to have, she said. We found it to be unobtainable on account of the complexities of French laws of inheritance—the *Code Napoléon*—under which family property is left to all descendants, who have equal shares in it. One small patch of land may belong to ten or twelve or more heirs, one of whose where-

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LESSONS OF A LIFETIME

Jamie and Fernanda Niven's Long Island house reflects a tradition of attractive country living

BY NANCY RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN RADKAI

A view into the garden, *above,* which consists of the remains of an old apple orchard, lawn cut by two fat crescent-shaped borders, big old maple and willow trees, 40-year-old rhododendrons, and a walled pool garden. *Opposite:* Downstairs sitting room and Tippy the cat. *Right:* In the front hall a library table, with a cotton table skirt: Sea Coral, Cowtan & Tout. Flowered "needlework" rug, Stark Carpet.

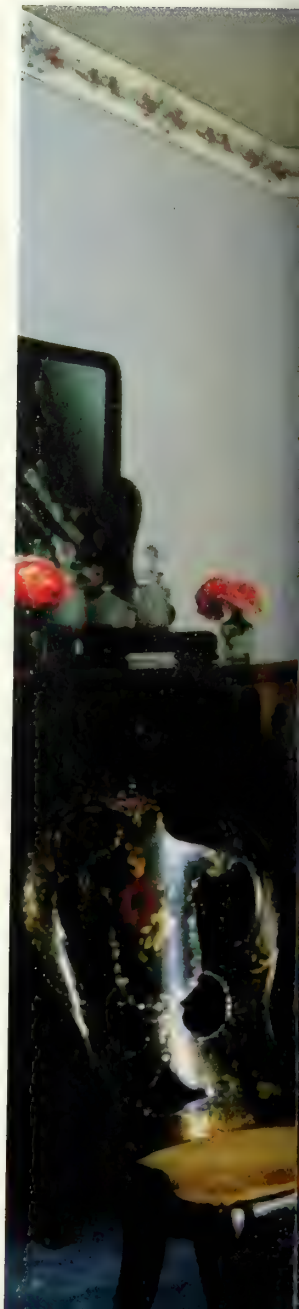






The Nivens' main sitting room gets its punch from a Lee Jofa big-flowered chintz and English watercolors in black Regency frames. Some of the upholstered chairs are Victorian models that have been reupholstered. Over the mantel: *Woman on a Sofa* by Paul Marie Rey in beige, pink, and blue from Patterson, Flynn and Martin.





Chintz in the Nivens' master bedroom, *right,* was brought back from Colefax and Fowler in London. Walls and floor are both pale blue against which the chintz, black lacquer, and papier-mâché furniture stand out. *Above left:* Blue-and-white porcelain, sisal rug, Colefax chintz set the theme for the dining room. French chairs were made at Artistic Frame, New York, because Jamie Niven did not want to sit on rickety old ones. *Left:* Lunch on the brick terrace.

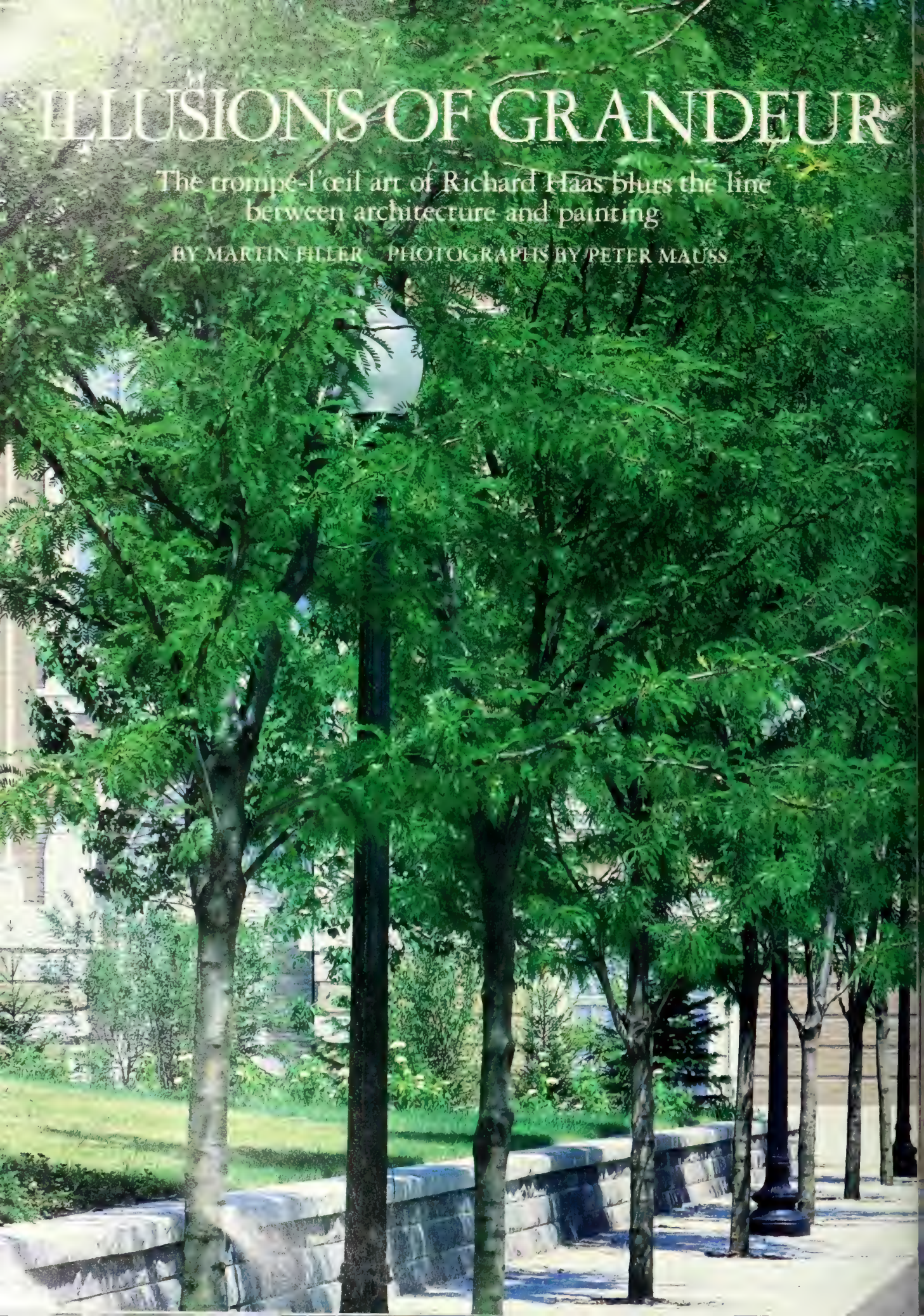


What's going on in Jamie and Fernanda Niven's house on Long Island is much more than the sum of its pleasant parts. On one hand it is a pretty shingled farmhouse that Fernanda first encountered as a child when her family rented it for a few summers. The house came on the market several years ago and the Nivens bought it immediately. All over again Fernanda loved its lack of symmetry, the watery apple green of the shutters and shingled roof, a roominess and—for all the lack of pretension—the fact that it was a real house and not a beach cottage. On the other hand it is—because of the life the Nivens lead—rather a bellwether of fashionable taste in the eighties.

In the sixties and seventies decorators and amateurs alike were inspired by—in particular—houses Billy Baldwin did for the Harding Lawrences—especially La Fiorentina in the south of France—rooms Albert Hadley did for the John Hay Whitneys on Long Island, a dining room- -among other things—that Stéphane Boudin did for Olive Bailey in Nassau—and anything Nancy Lancaster or Sister Parish did for themselves. Though none of these houses looked in the least alike, the impact of their good looks was to define—more or less—what was thought of then as fashionable resort and country decoration. Their sophistication lay not so much in the architecture, collections, and arrangements, though those were often important, but rather in the pace of the life, the variety of the houseguests, the profusion of flowers in the garden, the nearness of the sea, the reassuring baking heat of a reliable sun.

In the eighties Fernanda Niven's generation is very aware of what went on in the last twenty years while enjoying the evolution of those rules into something that's still in the process of being defined. What is well-established, however, is a persistent trend toward shopping the past for ideas. Some of *(Text continued on page 258)*





ILLUSIONS OF GRANDEUR

The trompé-l'œil art of Richard Haas blurs the line between architecture and painting

BY MARTIN FILLER PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER MAUSS



SITE FOR SORE EYES

This Haas mural on a blank wall of a transformer station in New Brunswick, New Jersey, was



LARRY WILLIAMS

Though he was seldom seen, his presence permeated the town, giving it a certain mystery and sense of belonging to a larger world." So wrote Richard Haas about Frank Lloyd Wright, his childhood idol and the most famous citizen of Haas's birthplace, Spring Green, Wisconsin. But he might just as well have been alluding to the effect his own work has had on communities across America over the past ten years. Haas is the artist best known for his illusionistic outdoor murals, which he has virtually transformed as an art form for our time by taking the enigma inherent in trompe-l'oeil and expanding it to the urban scale.

For a decade now his fake cast-iron façade on the corner of Prince and Greene streets in New York has been a SoHo landmark, while his cutaway view of a Classical cupola on a blank wall of the Boston Architectural Center has caused countless double takes on the nearby Fitzgerald Expressway. In Milwaukee, Galveston, Chicago, and Fort Worth, his unfailingly imaginative schemes have become distinctive and yet integral parts of the civic fabric.

But the art of Richard Haas goes far beyond the intriguing trickery and upgrading of eyesores that is an essential part of its public appeal. His work is part history lesson, part plea for preservation, part homage to the past, and wholly the expression of a very con-



FRIENDLY FAUX

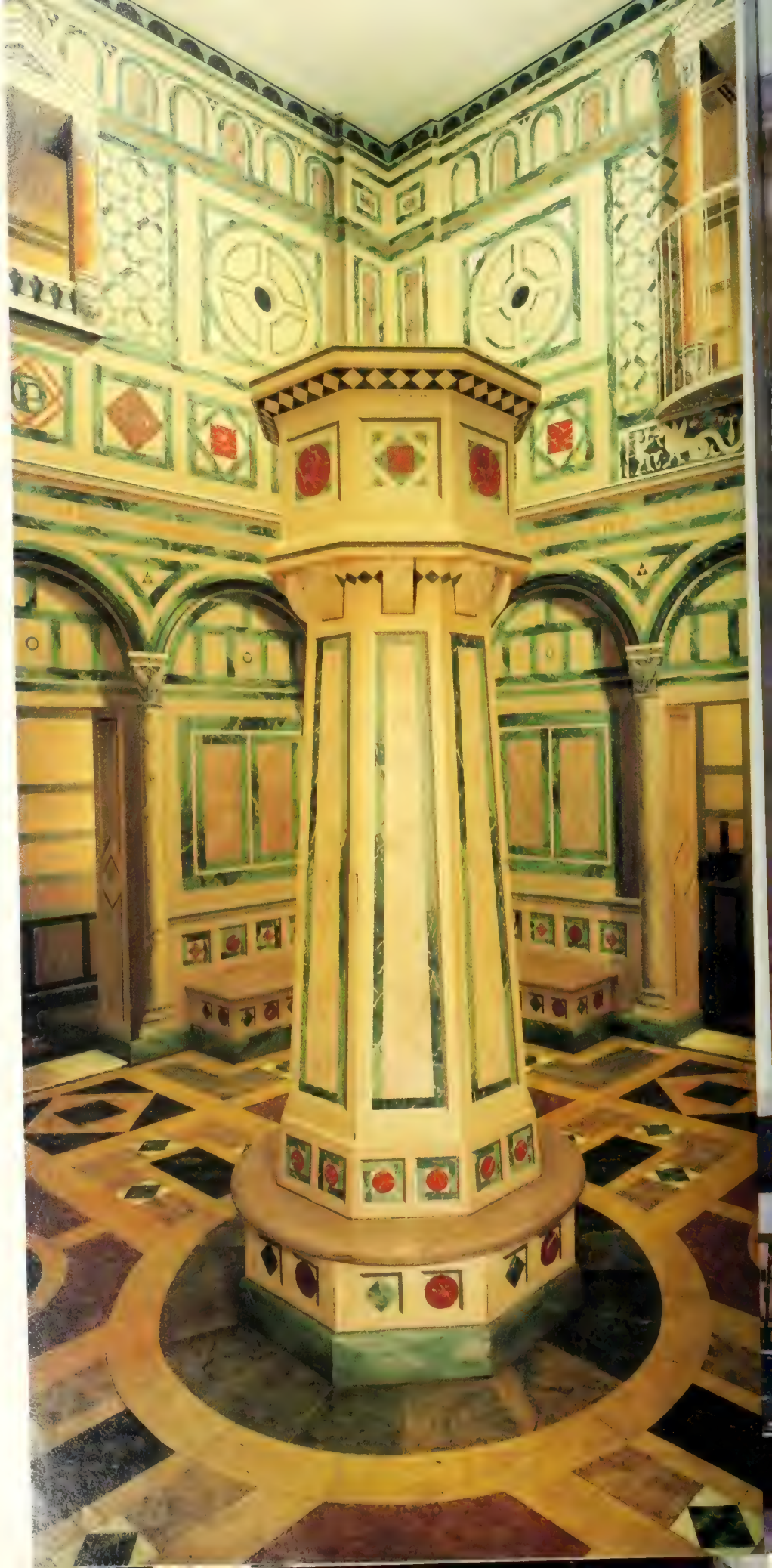
Above: Richard Haas photographed in his Manhattan studio by Larry Williams, with one of the Art Deco–style chairs he designed for an installation at New York's Brooke Alexander Gallery, *right*. A tour-de-force of faux finishes, it is the artist's affectionate and highly inventive homage to the vigorous Zig-Zag Modernism of the twenties.



temporary outlook. If there is an American artist who perfectly captures the predominant mood of this moment—the tension between our simultaneous fascination with the past and our unavoidable awareness of an all-too-precarious future—it is Richard Haas. He has painted himself a unique niche in the American scene.

Haas has come of artistic age during a period in which the worlds of art and architecture have been wracked by controversy over the role of representation, the central issue in the revolt against abstraction and minimalism in painting and the rejection of the International Style in architecture. Haas has resolved those conflicts in his art with considerably greater success than many of his colleagues in either art form. His experiments with historical form and ornament, for example, have a coherence that has eluded most Post-Modern architects (whose penchant for revivalism and eclecticism Haas anticipated years before they made it fashionable), whereas his deft handling of complex surface pattern makes the work of some of the so-called Pattern Painters seem rather shallow by comparison.

At the same time, Haas

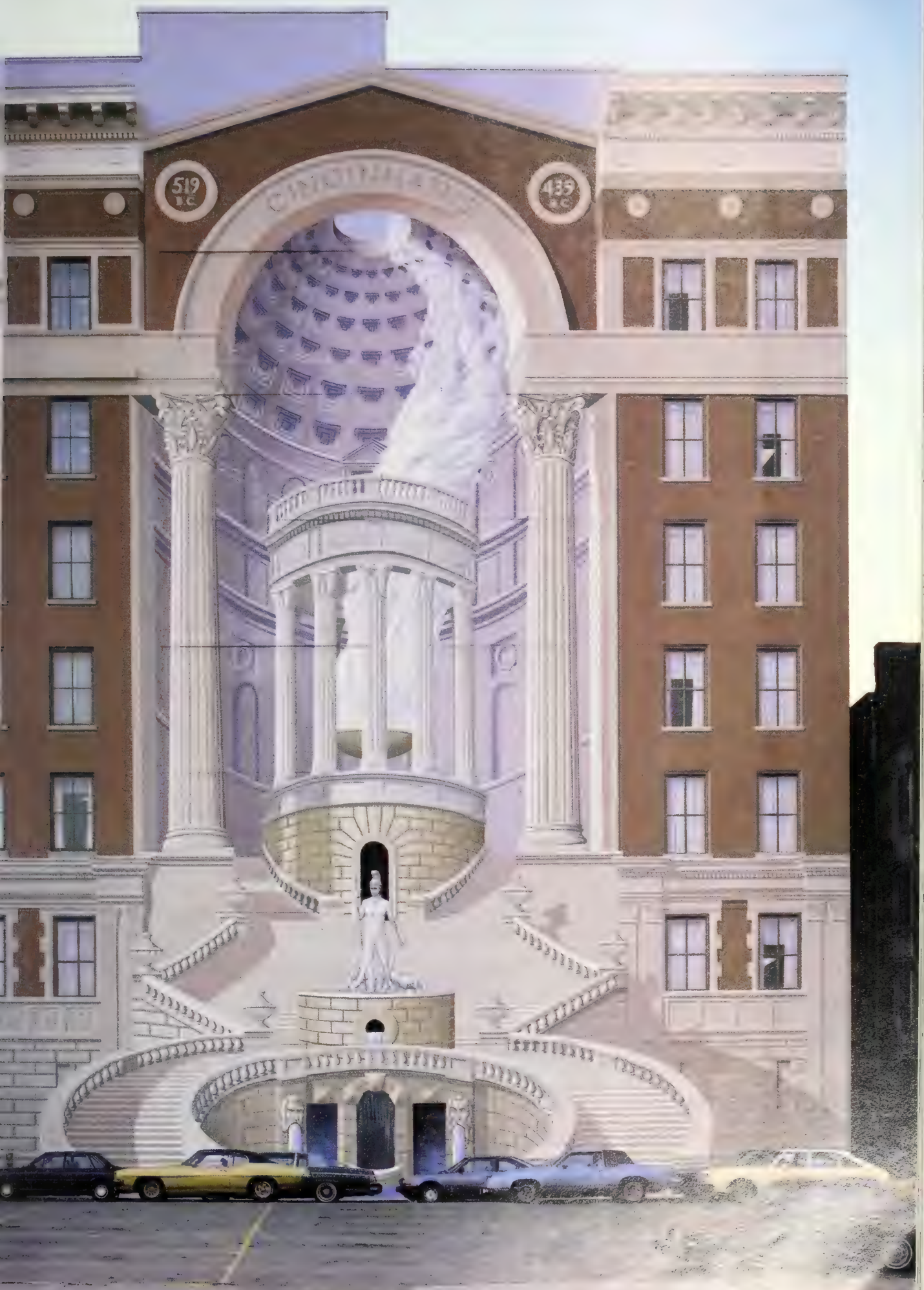


ALL HIS MARBLES

Right: Haas's lobby for a modern apartment building in Chicago is based on the Romanesque church of San Miniato in Florence.

FALSE HEROICS

Far right: On a side wall of the Kroger Co.'s annex in Cincinnati, a fantasy inspired by Piranesi pays tribute to Cincinnatus, the ancient Roman farmer-warrior for whom the city is named.


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has been able to attract one of the most broadly based constituencies in art today, achieving a high degree of recognition from critics while enjoying noteworthy popularity among a public that still might not know his name.

It is unusual for an artist whose work is so seemingly conservative on the one hand and yet so genuinely inventive on the other to win the approval of both specialist and layman. But Richard Haas has broken that taste barrier as completely as he has the rigid definition of what is the proper purview of the artist and the architect in our society.

The art of Richard Haas is as genial, unpedantic, and accessible as the man who creates it. But like his work, the artist commands a greater store of knowledge than one might initially suspect. Like the best Neoclassicists of the eighteenth century, Haas knows too much to use it in an obvious or derivative manner. His designs have a way of seeming exactly like something we think we've seen before, until we look at his sources and realize that more often than not they are merely the departure points for his particular brand of inspired invention.

Take, for instance, his spectacular new mural on an annex of the Kroger Co.'s headquarters complex in Cincinnati. Intrigued by the origin of the city's name (from the Roman patriot Cincinnatus, who took up arms with great bravery in time of war but returned to being a farmer in time of peace, inspiration for the Society of the Cincinnati after the Revolutionary War) Haas turned to one of his favorite artists, the eighteenth-century Italian master Giovanni Battista Piranesi, for an appropriate model.

From the *Prima Parte* of 1743 (the earliest published works of the great engraver) he chose an architectural fantasy of a coffered, oculus-lit dome with a baroque billow of incense wafting upward. This, much modified, became the central motif of his scheme, to which he added other Classical elements—a pair of curving stairways and a statue of the ancient hero—as well as an astonishingly lifelike mirror-image of the banal existing architecture of the building to flank the niche of Cincinnatus.

The result is vintage Haas. Instead of trying to make this ordinary office building seem as though it were standing in the Roman Forum, Haas celebrates the contradictions of his mural's placement in a dull Ohio downtown. Thus he has at once established an unforgettable image in the mind's eye of his viewers and evoked the same sense of mystery and connection to a larger tradition that he ascribed so eloquently to Frank Lloyd Wright.



RESPONSIVE READING

Above: In The New York Public Library's Periodical Reading Room, fourteen Haas paintings trace the architectural history of New York publishing houses.

A HIGHER COURT

Opposite: The grim air shaft of New York's Alwyn Court apartments was transformed into a dignified atrium with a design that mimics the building's ornate stone façade.

When Richard Haas was born in 1936 near Taliesin, Wright was at the euphoric onset of his so-called Second Career, the amazing (to everyone but him) reversal of fortune that returned him to the peak of creative power and public recognition. For Haas it was rather like growing up in Versailles in the days of Louis XIV, for Wright was no less a cynosure of local attention.

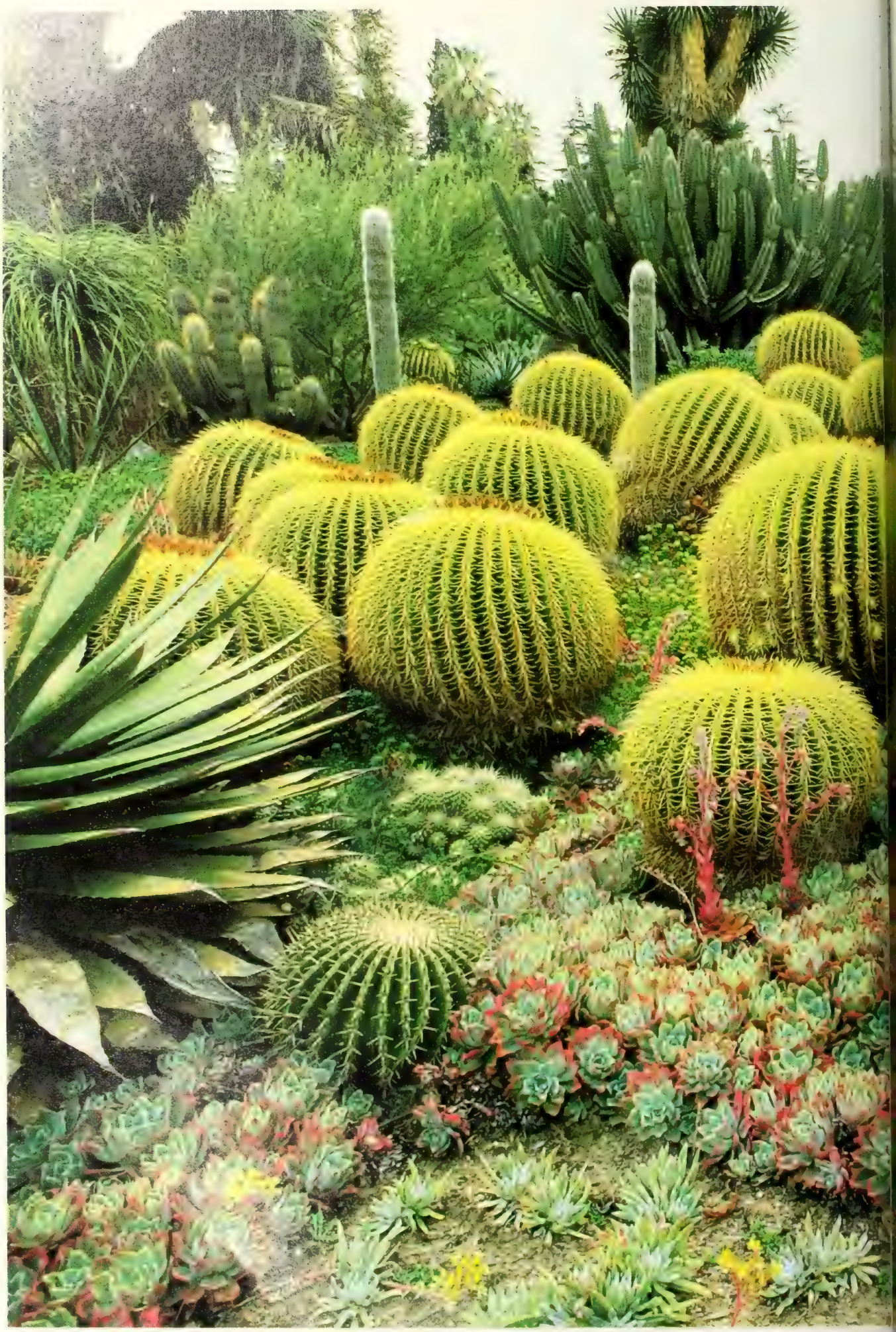
Haas's father—an immigrant German butcher with whom the Wrights often ran up long-unpaid tabs—looked on his neighbor not as a living legend but rather as an improvident poseur. His son Richard, however, fell under the spell of the genius of the place, and as a young man he began designing imaginary structures in the manner of FLLW. His uncle George Haas was the Taliesin stonemason, and when Richard was nineteen he went to work for him at the architect's hilltop manor.

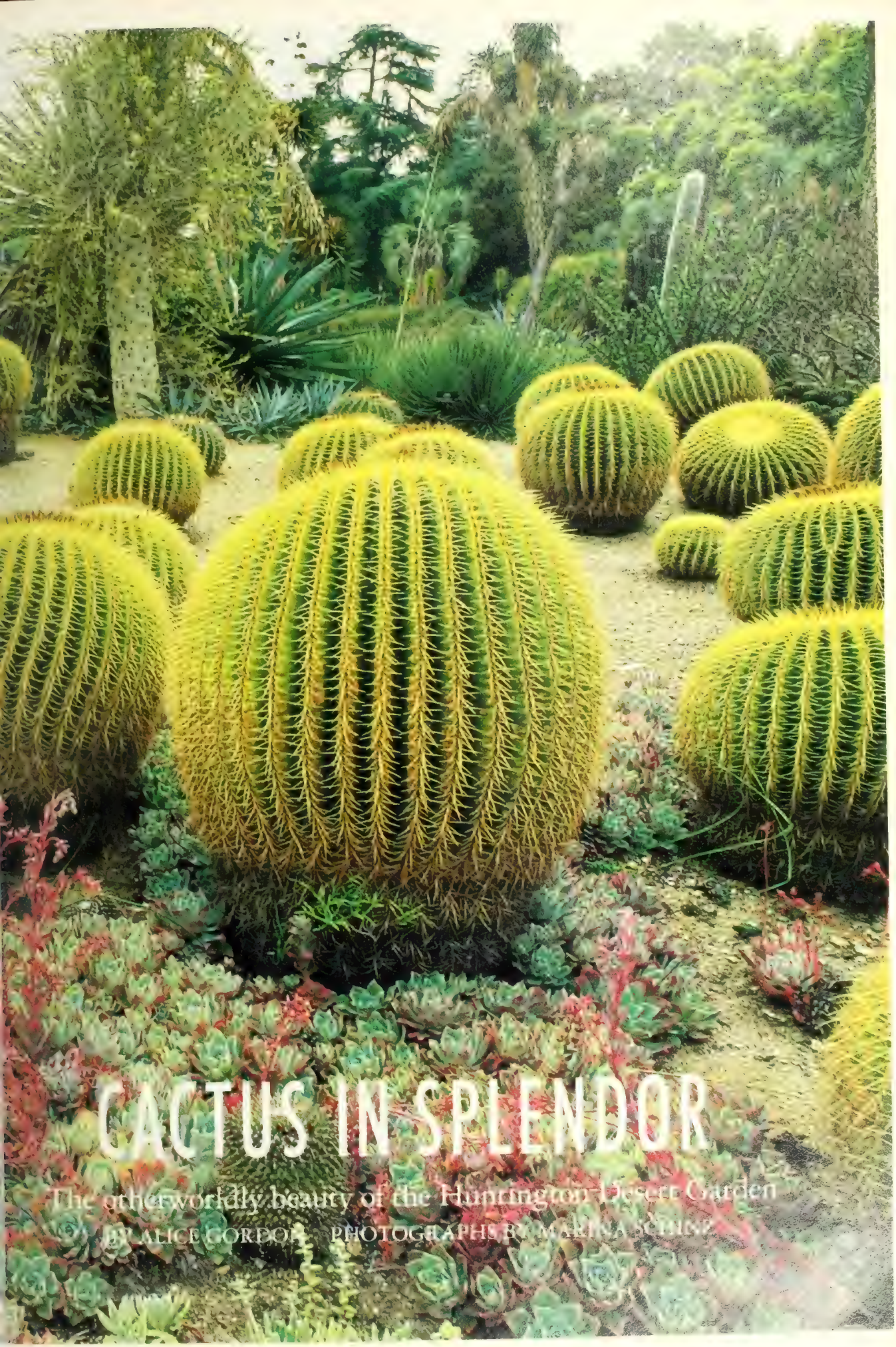
Even then it was clear that the young man's primary interest was in painting rather than architecture, and the apprentice was pressed into service to help make the decorations for a Venetian-style fête, one of the theme parties in which the Master delighted. But Wright was near the end of his long life and long past even his late prime; the lesson that Richard Haas took from Taliesin was primarily that of the importance of an independent vision.

He then began to study painting at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, and his early works bore a strong resemblance

(Text continued on page 238)







CACTUS IN SPLENDOR

The otherworldly beauty of the Huntington Desert Garden

BY ALICE GORDON PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARINA SCHINZ





Fifty-year-old golden barrel cacti (*Echinocactus grusonii*), preceding pages, form one of the Desert Garden's most spectacular displays. Opposite: Plants from Baja California include creeping devil cacti (*Machaerocereus eruca*), siemprevivas (*Dudleya brittonii*) on rocks, boojums (*Fouquieria columnaris*) in background. Above: Growing down to path, *Portulacaria afra* (left), *Acanthocereus pentagonus* 'Monstrosus'. Tall blooms: *Aloe spp.*

Jim Dice, the curator of the Huntington Desert Garden in San Marino, California, reminded me that vis-à-vis beauty, cacti present a perception problem. For all the people who are attracted to them, he said, there are just as many who have "no desire for any affiliation whatsoever with cacti." Thinking about this while walking through the garden, I flashed on the *Twilight Zone* episode about a young woman who we earthling TV viewers thought was very pretty but who fell far short of her own planet's frankly porcine standard of beauty and was therefore exiled to a place where other "ugly" people like herself lived. What that other place was to her planet, I thought, the Huntington Desert Garden could be to our world of plants. For example, compared to the *Aeonium arboreum* 'Zwartkop', which approximates an outsized black-enamel zinnia, a rose is plain at best.

There exists no real desert environment like the one at the Huntington Library/Art Gallery/Botanical Gardens, which is, of course, one reason it's such a thrill to explore. The garden is a triumph of shamelessly sensuous landscaping, twelve acres crammed with tough, voluptuous plants from all over the world, some native to climates tropical as well as arid. There are twenty thousand individuals from 2,500 species to look at, and they make up forty percent of all the plants in the ten theme gardens that spread over the Huntington's 207 acres.

From the tiny pincushion cacti on the rockery walk to the towering dragon tree, most of the plants in the Desert Garden are weird-looking because they also look like things other than themselves. Some, such as the lithops family, known as "living stones," blatantly mimic their surroundings. Others seem to take the serious business of adapting to a hostile environment with a sense of humor: one plant looks like a green balloon sculpture, another a piece of salted fish, another a deer's antlers studded with pompons. A ground cover resembles a spilled bag of lime jellybeans, another, a child's upward-reaching fingers, *(Continued on page 250)*



Barrel cacti (*Echinocactus ingens*) nestle in a luxurious bed of brilliant blue senecio (*Senecio Mandraliscae*).



A fantastic profusion of serpentlike cacti (*Trichocereus thelegonus*) from northwestern Argentina.





e Huntington has one of the world's largest collections of African aloes, here mixed with columnar cacti and golden barrel cacti. Looming in the background is a gargantuan South American cereus (*Cereus sp.*).

BUENOS AIRES PIED-À-TERRE

Designer Juan Pablo Molyneux creates an opulent setting for his wife and himself

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI



The apartment of many moods is entered through a bare, gleaming foyer, *this page,* with marble floor and lacquered walls. Pine column is new; German caryatid bracket is old. *Opposite:* Dark-brown velvet walls, red-and-gold coffered ceiling, [illegible] give [illegible] its own strong character. Molyneux achieved this lofty view within a small area







The entry is white and bare, the library is dark and velvety, the dining room is hard and glittering. "I like defined spaces," the apartment's owner and designer, Juan Pablo Molyneux, explains, "even in a place that is small."

When the Chilean-born designer decided to live and work in New York as well as Buenos Aires, he and his wife, Pilar, moved from a vast apartment in Buenos Aires to a pied-à-terre in an old French-style building in that city's most fashionable neighborhood.

The neighborhood was one of the apartment's attractions, and so was the height of the rooms. Another advantage turned out to be the very poor condition of the existing interior surfaces, which Molyneux felt gave him license to tear down every room partition and build anew.

Within the empty shell, the designer developed a completely different floor plan and enriched it with luxurious decorative detail. He paved his front rooms with white marble, coffered two of the ceilings in Renaissance style, and topped all the major doorways with traditional arches, which frame interior vistas. Another bit of indoor scenery-making was the conversion of an outside balcony into a greenhouse viewed from several rooms.

Molyneux's broad taste, unified by a preference for the formal, spans many centuries and draws upon many styles. With this stock in trade, his practice now spans two continents. □ *By Elaine Greene. Editor: Kaaren Parker Gray*

On living-room walls, a tiny-patterned fabric designed by Molyneux. Also his design: the seating, the marble-and-Lucite coffee table.

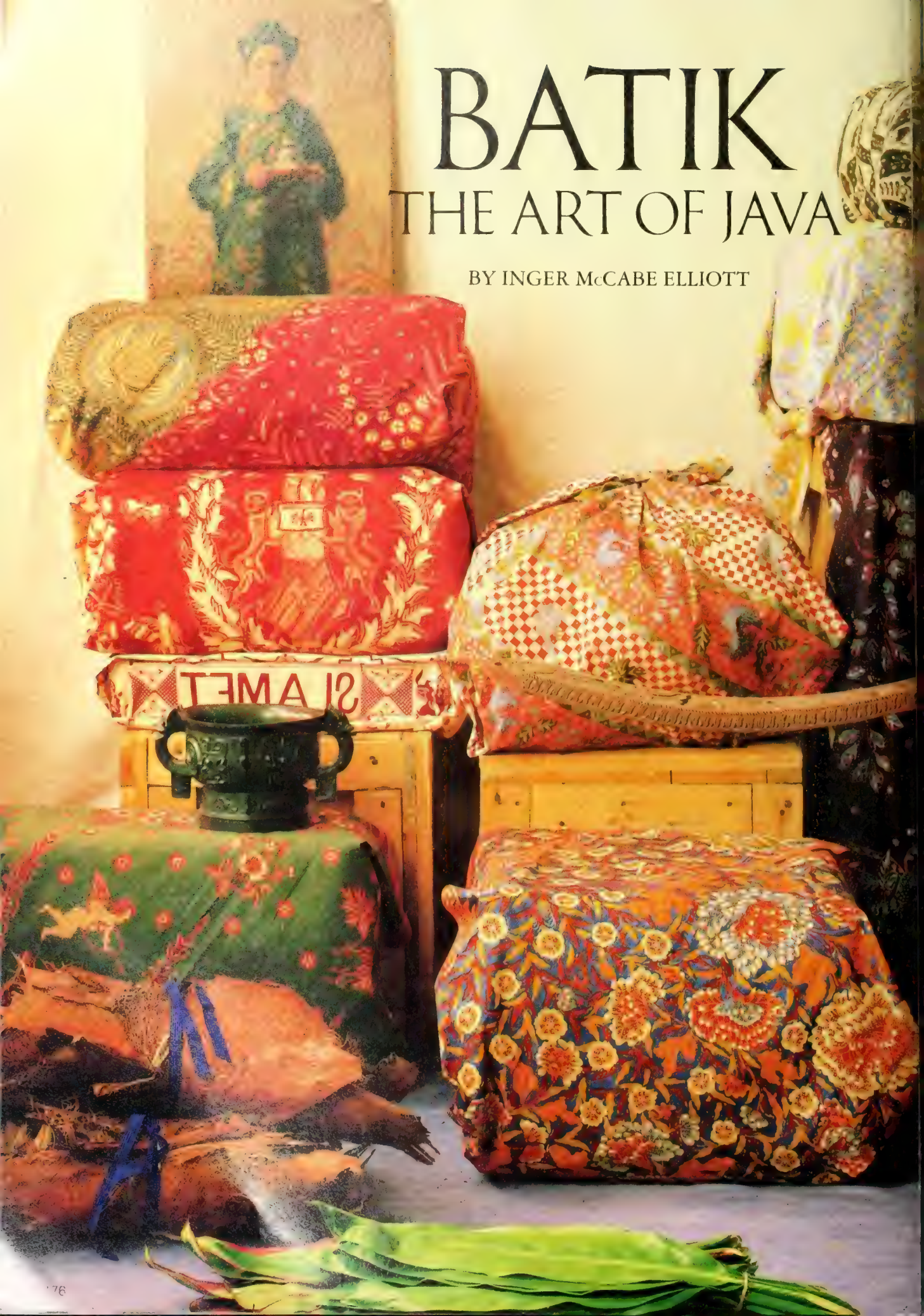
Juan Pablo Molyneux enlarged his tiny dining room, *opposite,* whose 4-by-4-foot hexagonal mahogany table almost fills it, by making it "a mirrored box" with a strict no-color palette. Regency chairs are lacquered and gilded. Paintings are 16th-century Dutch; chandelier is English. *Above:* From the living room, through one of a pair of symmetrically placed archways, is seen the balcony-turned-greenhouse. *Below:* The velvet-lined bedroom was designed for tranquility. Behind mirrors is a wall of closets.





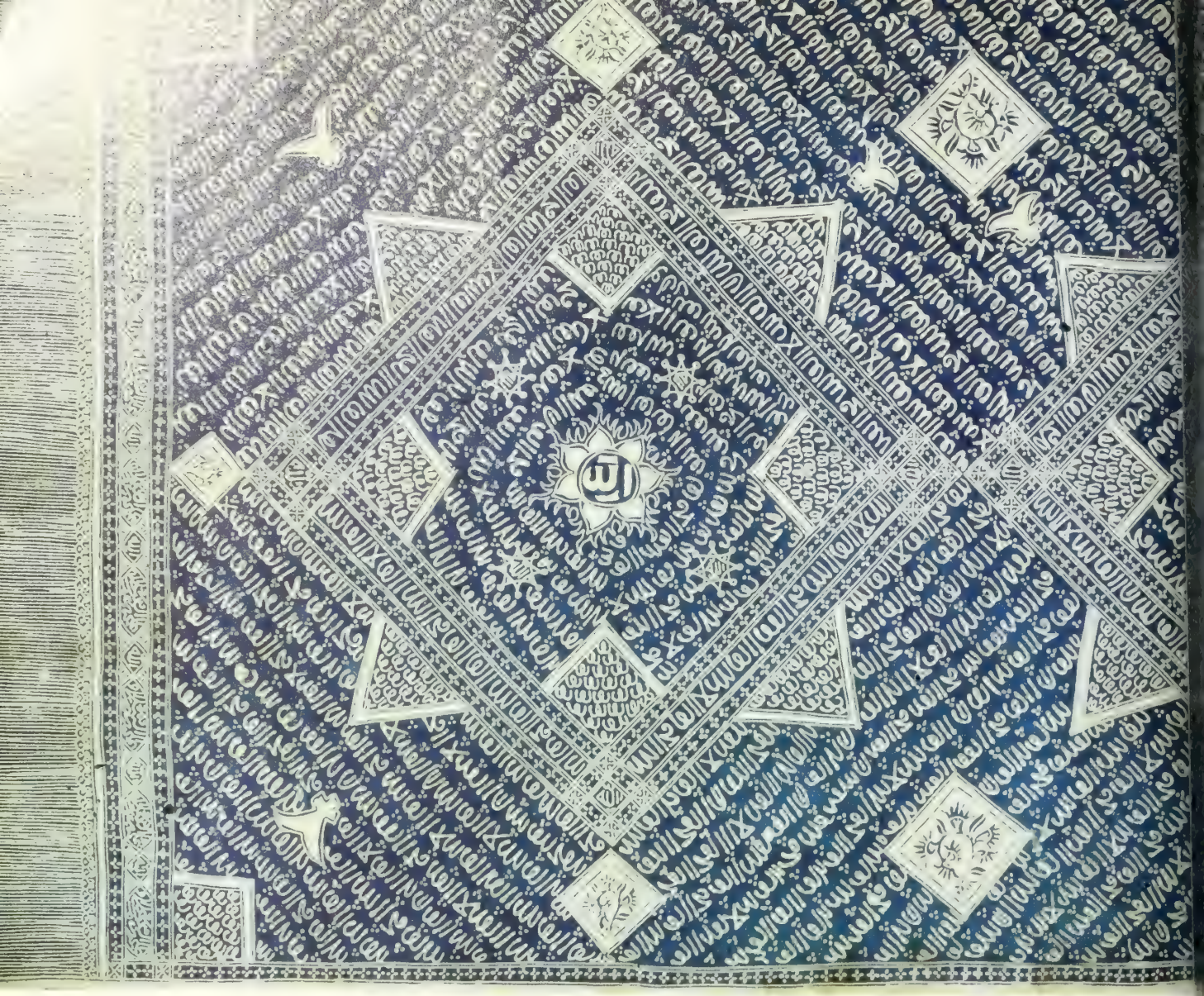
BATIK
THE ART OF JAVA

BY INGER McCABE ELLIOTT





Reminiscent of a colonial trading post, a scene designed especially for House & Garden by Patrick Naggar of Didier Aaron and photographed by Oberto Gili is filled with a variety of one-of-a-kind batiks from the turn of the century. The 19th-century French painting by Jost, Indo-Portuguese chair, and 19th-century Japanese bronze vase from Didier Aaron, New York. All batik from the collection of Inger McCabe Elliott, New York, with the exception of the cinnabar and coral piece, far right of picture, which is from the collection of Jonathan Hope, London.



Rich in color and complex in pattern, distinctive batiks created along the north coast of Java are the subject of a fascinating new book and a traveling exhibition now at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C.

For hundreds of years the Javanese coast has lain at a crossroads of trade, near the course sailed by Marco Polo, Magellan, Sir Francis Drake, and St. Francis Xavier. It is even probable, although as yet unproved, that the Javanese themselves sailed to other parts of Asia as early as the pre-Christian era. Later, trade brought with it a succession of religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam—and successive waves of colonization. Each of these influences left its imprint on the culture of Java and on its finest art form, batik.

The roots of batik are ancient, everywhere, and difficult to trace. No one knows exactly where and when people first began to apply wax, vegetable paste, paraffin, or even mud to cloth that would then resist a dye. But it was on the islands of Java and nearby Madura that batik emerged as one of the great art forms of Asia. Batik is known to have existed in China, Japan, India, Thailand, East Turkestan, Europe, and Africa, and it may have developed simultaneously in several of these areas. Some scholars believe that the process originated in India and was later brought to Egypt. Whatever the case, in A.D. 70, in his *Natural History,* Pliny the Elder told of Egyptians applying designs to cloth in a manner similar to the batik process. The method was known seven hundred years later in China. Scholars have ascertained that batik found in Japan was Chinese, made during the Tang Dynasty.

Thus, batik was already an ancient tradition by the time the earliest historical evidence of Javanese work appeared in the sixteenth century. Records from the coast of Malabar in 1516 suggest the painted cloth for export may have been batiked. The first known mention of *Javanese* batik occurs two years later, in 1518, when the word



Used to cover the head of a bridal couple during the marriage ceremony, the *selendang, above,* patterned in Arabic calligraphy, demonstrates the impact of the Moslem non-representational tradition on batik design. *Overleaf, left:* Detail of a sarong batik from Pekalongan, circa 1900, shows the signature of the designer, E.V. Zuylen. From the collection of Jacques Gadbois. *Overleaf, right:* Javanese dancer or *Rongging* wearing a sarong under sashes used in intricate dance movements with hips, arms, and hands. Lithograph by Lemercier after E. Hardouin.

tulis, a tool used for batik making, appeared; the term survives today to specify the finest hand-drawn batik. One hundred years later the word *baték* actually appeared in an inventory of goods sent to Sumatra.

Before cotton is batiked, it must be prepared to receive wax and dyes. Sometimes it is boiled to remove sizing or stiffness in the fibers. After boiling, the cloth is treated with oil and lye to give it a base color and to prepare the fibers to receive the dyes; rinsed in yet another bath and while still wet, folded. Placed on a wooden baseboard, the cloth is then beaten with a mallet, to soften the fibers and enable the material to absorb wax.

After the baths and the beating, a design is applied by pencil to the prepared fabric. The cloth is then ready to receive its first waxing, known as *ngrengreng.*

Hand-drawn batik is called *tulis,* after the Javanese for "writing." Combining the finest designs with the best cottons, *tulis* is the most time-consuming, expensive, and highly prized batik. The basic tool is the *canting* (also spelled *tjanting*), with which liquid wax is drawn on cloth.

The *canting* works much like a fountain pen. It has a bamboo or reed handle, about six inches long, with a small, thin copper cup from which a tiny pipe protrudes. (Copper is used for both cup and pipe because it conducts heat and keeps the wax warm and fluid.) A woman holds the *canting* by its bamboo handle, scooping up the heated wax and blowing through the tip of the pipe to keep the wax fluid. Then using the *canting*'s pipe as a pen, she draws the design *(Text continued on page 246)*

ILLUSTRATIONS ARE FROM AN UNPUBLISHED [illegible] CLOTH OF ALL KINDS FROM ASIA BY N. POTTER [illegible]


Lu Jun



THE HAGMANS AT HOME



NANCY ELLISON, SYGMA

Designed by Alie Chang Paul, their Malibu house is a million miles from Dallas

BY GABRIELLE WINKEL PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI





Maj and Larry Hagman, *preceding pages, left,* in what they fondly call their "barefoot house." *Preceding pages, right:* Larry's flag collection seen from the beach. The Hagman flag, second from left, is a gift from actor David Wayne and bears a Latin motto that means "Life is a feast." *Left:* The handle on the front door is a copper Mayan-style fish, its eye the keyhole. It was made by craftsman George Martin. *Right:* The living-room coffee table, like many wood pieces here, was made by a friend, furniture designer Tom Braverman. All fireplaces were hand-sculpted by Maj Hagman. The project architect was J. Scott Carter.

Larry Hagman may be the only person who has ever come to the defense of J.R. Ewing, the *Dallas* villain who has fascinated television viewers for years. "I don't think he's so mean. He's just taking care of business and looking after his family." The two men do have that in common: Hagman has virtually made a business of being J.R. on the small screen and in magazine ads and product endorsements, but not at the expense of his thirty-year, two-child marriage. When it comes to domestic life there is a world of difference between the two men.

Actor Larry Hagman and his Swedish-born designer wife, Maj, live a life as full as the Ewings', but one without the backroom trickery and living-room acrimony over oil wells, inheritances, and amours that are daily fare for the Ewings. Instead the Hagmans live amiably, entertaining their grown children and his *Dallas* co-stars, enjoying their pool, spa, and video equipment, and traveling for filming and fun.

The Hagmans have lived on the Malibu beach for about eighteen years, also maintaining houses in Santa Fe and Mexico. Two years ago, they wanted to renovate their wood house in Malibu but learned that dry rot, termites, and wiring problems were so bad it was more sensible to build a new one. With architectural designer Alie Chang Paul they rebuilt, following their original remodeling plan but adding many new elements. Recalling the couple's travels, the house combines the whitewashed masonry walls of a Greek farmhouse, the exposed cedar beams of a Spanish Colonial ranch.

They placed the house around the 10-by-10-foot L-shaped Jacuzzi spa that Maj designed years before. In the big, simple rooms, stucco walls curve to create shelves, niches, and seats, and there are eight fireplaces hand-sculpted by Maj, who inspired the project foreman's admiring comment, "When I met you I threw away my level." A 14½-by-14½-foot skylight over the stairway brightens and opens the entire house.

Both Hagmans want their house and their life to get "simpler and simpler and simpler." Simplicity to them means easy maintenance and minimal worry. Maj says, "We tried to cut out anything that made life hard. Life usually has edges: something bothers you but you just can't pinpoint it. Too many objects—that's one edge that we have eliminated." So they did not cover the new walls with works of art from the old house. Instead they culled:





When foreman Don Lira went to Santa Fe to get the feel of another Hagman house, he came back with the forked log now standing in the living room, seen *this page*. The wood sculpture of a sleeping baby is instinctively caressed by visitors. *Opposite:* The array of books and the Hagmans' favorite antique rug add pattern to the living room. Brick floors throughout the house are warmed by solar-heated water running through copper pipes.

paintings by their son-in-law, Brian Blount, by friend Barton Lidice Benes, and two works by luminaries of the theater—a gladiolus by Beatrice Lillie, and a yellow rose by Henry Fonda commissioned in the late forties by Hagman's mother, Mary Martin, when she played in *South Pacific* and Fonda was Mr. Roberts.

Simplicity is the key, "but I still want my toys," says Larry. They include hydraulic beds, a cappuccino maker, a stereo system that brings music to beach and bedroom, TV screens large and small, indoors and at poolside, and a store-display, much-larger-than-life Swiss army knife that opens and closes.

Gadgets notwithstanding, tranquil-





ity fills the Hagman house—especially on Sundays when there are mimosas and Sunday papers by the pool and Bach cantatas fill the air and Larry doesn't say a word. "Larry lost his voice twelve years ago and he had to be quiet for two days. He discovered it was a discipline and a pleasure and he kept it up. People tell him more when he's silent, too," Maj explains. This is a tactic J.R. might profit by. □

Editor: Joyce MacRae



Video-screen controls double as a table in the ocean-viewing "tea-house room," *right*. Painting by Adrian Wortzel. *Above:* The wife of actor Carroll O'Connor convinced Maj to buy this five-legged English men's-club chair when she said its price was "only a case of wine."


FLYERS





Larry hangs his hats under the big skylight on a saguaro cactus carved in wood, *above. Opposite:* The ladder in the master bedroom leads to a loft where the Hagmans exercise. The bed coverings are part of Maj's antique linen collection. *Church in Taos* is a work by the Hagmans' son-in-law, Brian Blount.





JOAN MITCHELL: ART AND LIFE AT VÉTHEUIL

BY LINDA NOCHLIN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT FRESON



Joan Mitchell, *top,* in the octagonal tower dining room at Vétheuil which dates from 1840. *Above:* A view of the town of Vétheuil on the Seine. *Opposite: La Grande Vallée, II,* 1983, oil on canvas, collection of Paula and Gerard Lennard, in the show of Joan Mitchell's work at Xavier Fourcade, November 29–January 5.



It's the blue gate," said the taxi driver as he let me off at Joan Mitchell's address on the rue Claude-Monet at Vétheuil. As instructed, I pushed against the gate forcefully. It swung open with a gentle rheumatic creak, and suddenly I was in another world: private, cool, darkly green, and with just that enticing, and particularly French, sense of mystery that in houses and gardens, as in people, suggests an interesting past. Rough stone pots of marigolds marked off an ivy-shrouded niche with two shady pathways ascending on either side of it. As I trudged up to the house, the silence was so complete, the foliage so dense that it was hard to believe that Paris was only forty minutes away, that Vétheuil was in fact, as my Michelin described it, part of the "Environs de Paris."

Suddenly, the pathway opened out onto an ample terrace, shade surrendered to brilliant light, but a light intercepted and dappled at its heart by the outstretched leafage of an enormous tree. To the right, a fourteenth-century cloister-portico served as an improvised woodshed. From this enchanted spot, directly





beneath my gaze, the Seine slowly curled its way through the countryside, winding through a landscape of embracing curves, slow-moving barges, and languid golden fields, enlivened by the occasional staccato touch of red-tiled roofs. Across the river, uneven stands of poplars, rigid as sentries on duty, marked off the miniature houses of Lavacourt from the bluish hills beyond. It was a view that suggested peace and permanence; indeed, a view not very different from the one that Claude Monet had looked out on when he had lived in the gardener's cottage below, on the street now named in his honor, more than a hundred years ago.

Walking across the terrace, I opened the French doors into a large, airy room with a high, wood-beamed ceiling, a grand fireplace, and, surprisingly, an oculus decorated with wrought-iron tracery offering a *(Text continued on page 226)*

The Billiard Room, *opposite,* in the older part of the house. *Top: Untitled,* 1983, pastel on paper, Xavier Fourcade, Inc. *Above:* The fields just outside Vétheuil.





A view of Joan Mitchell's house on the hill, *top,* with gardener's cottage, once the house of Monet, below it. *Above: La Grand Vallée, VII,* 1983, oil on canvas, collection of Gérard Pons-Seguin, Paris. *Right:* The 14th-century cloister portico is used as a potting shed. *Opposite:* The linden on the terrace overlooking the Seine







A view of the House of West Wycombe and the island with the Temple of Music, c. 1765, by Nicholas Revett, based on Temple of Vesta in Rome; it was formerly used as a theater and for *fêtes champêtres*.

ECRETS OF WEST WYCOMBE

e fascinating country seat of the dashing founder of the Hell-Fire Club

BY SIR JOHN PLUMB
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANÇOIS HALARD





The double colonnaded South Front of West Wycombe, *above,* built after 1754. *Opposite:* A bust of Joseph Borgnis sits by the main staircase of mahogany with satinwood inlay; Borgnis, who painted the frescoes along stairs about 1750, arrived from Craveggia near Milan at the invitation of the first Sir Francis Dashwood and stayed with his family at West Wycombe for twenty years.

West Wycombe astonishes all who visit this small, carefully preserved Chiltern village. The great golden globe beckons for miles, perched high above the Church of St. Lawrence which dominates the village, and crowning an escarpment that brings to its worshipers vistas of hill and dale and beechwood unsurpassed by any parish church in Britain. As visitors toil to the top of the winding road that leads to the church, they can rest on a terrace by the notorious caves of the Hell-Fire Club with their gingerbread Gothic façade; caves which have caught the erotic imagination of generations and so embroidered the legend of the first Sir Francis Dashwood who, the scoffers of legend would have it, quarried them because he wanted to build a road up the hill. Or was that the reason?

Were there orgies in the cave? Were there orgies too at Medmenham, a medieval abbey by the Thames which Sir Francis rented, for fishing parties, the scoffers say? The legend is of lecheries, the same lecheries that Cleland described in *Fanny Hill,* of men dressed as monks and whores as nuns locked in ritualistic copulation. Rumor embroiders, of course, with garish colors and deliberate exaggeration, but it is rare indeed for rumor to be without any basis at all. And, how strange to garnish a quarry with an ecclesiastical façade or to have oneself painted, as Sir Francis did, in monkish robes—for no reason at all.

Leaving aside for a moment the private life of Sir Francis Dashwood, who built the church and the house and laid out the garden with its many lakes and follies, West Wycombe could claim the respect and admiration of all who visit it even had its creator been a bishop of impeccable character. West Wycombe, however, has been lucky in the Dashwoods. They were very rich Turkey merchants in the seventeenth century, and in addition to the estates at West Wycombe they possessed large properties at Necton in Lincolnshire, which mercifully they preferred in the nineteenth century when they were not pioneering sheep runs in New Zealand. So for over a century West Wycombe was left alone, decaying a little, but preserving all that had been created by Sir Francis and his stepbrother, Sir John, who succeeded him. Hard times forced the present Sir Francis Dashwood's father to make over the property to the National Trust but post-war inflation made his endowment of diminishing use in preserving, let alone restoring, this unique property. Fortunately the present Sir Francis makes fortunes with ease and is obsessively devoted to West Wycombe, which has risen phoenixlike in all its original beauty. Temples have been restored; the beautiful eighteenth-century colors glisten on the walls of the house; marble floors have been revealed, furniture, chandeliers, antique vases, and pictures tracked down and restored. At present the great vista, designed by the original Sir Francis, is being reconstructed, as it runs through a great wood and needs a dramatic obelisk at its point of perspective—no light task. Ten more years and the genius and the restless but decisive energy of the present Sir Francis will have restored house and garden to its full eighteenth-century beauty and significance.

The house, the garden, the church are immediately impressive in their beauty, but they are full of symbols and ambiguities as well. They express the character and interests of one man as few houses and gardens do. And it helps one's enjoyment of West Wycombe if one is aware of both the character of the first Sir Francis and the world in which he moved. *(Text continued on page 216)*





Detail of Music Saloon, *this page*. Dining room, *opposite*, restored to original grandeur with ceiling based on design taken from sepulcher at Palmyra. Portraits, left to right: the first Sir Francis Dashwood as Pope Pontius VII by Adrien Carpentiers, and as Postmaster-General by Nathaniel Dance.









Landscape views of West Wycombe in 1764 by William Hannan, Scottish cabinetmaker, and ancestral portraits hang in the Red Drawing Room, *opposite, above;* over fireplace is a painting commemorating the founding of the Dilettanti Society. *Far left:* The Temple of Apollo, also called the "cockpit," as cockfights took place in sand pit beneath the arch. *Left:* A chestnut by the lake. *Above:* In the library, Roman statues sit on mantelpiece and above it hang portraits of Vere, Earl of Westmorland, and members of his family. *Right:* A portrait of the first Sir Francis Dashwood in the Dining Room as "Il Faquin Dashwood Pasha" in the costume of Divan Club, which he founded for friends who, like himself, had visited Ottoman Empire. The ladies who belonged, like Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, were called "Sultanas."





The Dashwood mausoleum, built by the Oxford stonemason John Bastard and based on Constantine's Arch in Rome.







Original floor of Portland and red Wilderness stone in the Marble Hall, *above,* was uncovered in 1964. A fine marble bust by Michael Rysbrack and early-18th-century longcase clock by John-Samuel Agar frame door leading to Yellow Saloon. *Left:* The cascade designed by Revett in 1760 with Sleeping Nymph after one on Capitoline Hill, Rome, represents the neck of a swan whose shape the lake echoes. *Opposite, above:* A Venus de Milo flanked by paintings after Rubens in the Blue Drawing Room, once the breakfast room where Benjamin Franklin played his King of Prussia hoax on guests. *Right:* The Temple of Venus sits on a hill and represents the tummy of an erotic folly whose legs are divided by the Venus Parlor below; inside is a large brick cave. The 42 erotic statues that used to be on the hill disappeared in 1750. *Far right:* The Temple of Music.









The Dashwood mausoleum and 13th-century church with tower rebuilt in 1751, inspired by Palladio's Customs House in Venice, the nave in 1763 after the Temple of the Sun at Palmyra. *Opposite:* Tapestries made by Josse de Vos, circa 1710, are reflected in a mirror in this State Dressing Room made for George III; a bit of ceiling made by Hannan based on those in Vatican loggia is also visible.



A mix of antique Roman and 18th-century busts stare out from the ground floor of the Double Colonnade derived from the Palazzo Chiericati in Vicenza. Frescoes on ceiling and at each end by Borgnis.



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(Continued from page 200) Sir Francis's family had just ceased to be *nouveau riche* and he had the self-confidence of his mother's aristocratic family, a confidence fortified by the national mood. Born in 1708, Sir Francis grew up in a very prosperous, very ebullient Britain which was beginning to sense the expanding power that was to lead it in the nineteenth century to world dominion. The young aristocrats were rich but like the Vanderbilts, the Fricks, and the Astors of the early twentieth century, they felt provincial when faced with the sophisticated arts of France and Italy; in architecture, painting, and sculpture, in music and opera they felt ignorant and jejune, and to remedy these shortcomings the rich British devised the Grand Tour for their offspring.

Sir Francis took greatly to travel—he went as far as Russia and visited Greece as well as Italy; and to Italy itself he went not once but several times. He bought pictures, studied architecture, learned the languages. He was ravished by antiquity, especially Greek, yet also entranced by rococo decoration. He was typical of the youth of his age in another way. The British were crazy about clubs. Some, like the Freemasons, started in 1719, were grand, formal, and highly organized; others like the artists' Roman Club a mere five or six friends of Arthur Pond who met to talk about classical antiquities and get drunk. On his return to England after his Grand Tour Sir Francis started the Society of Dilettanti for men of like tastes. The Society had its painter, George Knapton, who immortalized the members in fancy dress and whose portraits still hang at Brooks's Club in London. Sir Francis remained its moving spirit. The Society was devoted to art; it was theatrical in its ritual and dress; it partook in all aspects of the sensuous and sensual life. There was, however, an overridingly serious purpose to the dilettanti: to promote the knowledge and appreciation of Greek and Roman art and to improve the practice of art in Britain. This intellectual commitment was as much a part of Sir Francis's character as his sensual pleasures.

The Grand Tour, however, made most young aristocrats unhappy with their family homes. An earlier generation than Sir Francis's had begun to rebuild their houses—the Devonshires at Chatsworth, Sir Robert Walpole at Houghton; the great Vanbrugh houses at Blenheim and Castle Howard had only recently been finished. When Sir Francis set about West Wycombe, he was doing very much what a rich young aristocrat of his generation was expected to do. The finished product, however, was unlike anything else that Britain knew.



The Temple of Winds, near the house, used for storage of ice.

There are two major architectural triumphs at West Wycombe—the church and the house—but both incorporate older buildings. Sir Francis, unlike many of his contemporaries, had considerable piety toward the past. In the great Palladian church which he built—the first Palladian parish church in England—he incorporated the remains of the late medieval tower in the building. Similarly the house contains the shell of the house built by his father in Queen Anne's day, but it remains a buried piety.

The most dramatic aspect of West Wycombe—the great double colonnade of the South Front—totally changed the house. It created a huge terrace, unique in England, made even more spacious by the frescoes on the end walls. Stretching away is a rising hill that underlines the sense of theater that one feels immediately on stepping onto the terrace: it was a perfect place for the long English summer evenings—ample room for music, for charades, or for sauntering and flirting. In a sense the double colonnade was a Palladian pastiche even though a most original one. The last development of the house was toward the end of Sir Francis's era and was equally unusual—the careful and accurate reconstruction of the Temple of Bacchus at Telos on the West Front. No one before had constructed such a replica. And it also marks one of the first essays in Neoclassicism in English country-house building. Remarkably it was not really a part of the house but the last of the garden temples. It was opened with a procession of "Bacchanals, Priests, Priestesses, Pan, fauns, satyrs, Silenus, etc., all in proper habits and wreathed with vine leaves. They made sacrifice to the statue of Bacchus that is still there and then returned to the garden for more music and frolics."

Frolics, indeed; the garden, the most elaborate of the eighteenth century that expresses the wanton genius of one man, abounds with visual delectations of every kind. From a hot-air balloon, the lakes and canals created by the damming of the river Wye form the shape of the swan with outstretched neck and legs, a swan shape that was in Sir Francis's day probably visible from the golden ball of the church where he sat and drank "Divine Milk Punch" and sang "blasphemous songs" with his friends. The swan was intended to recall the wanton sport of Leda. Upon the island of the lake he built the Temple of Music, beautiful and inviting for music or dalliance and marvelously discreet, for it could only be reached by one of the miniature warships with which Sir Francis adorned his lake. On the way to the Music Temple, however, one could pause at the Parlor of Venus, whose deliberate eroticism left no one in doubt of its purpose or intent. Its entrance was as entirely feminine as its shape. More discreet was the Temple of the Winds, a charming Palladian folly for long English summer evenings of music, wine, and flirtation. Or the Temple of Apollo made for a different sport: it contained a cockpit and yet it may have had other purposes, for the motto of the Hell-Fire Club, *Liberati Amicatiaeque Sac* (Sacred to Liberty



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and Friendship), is inscribed in a panel over its arch.

However, the most striking feature of the garden is its obvious theatricality: it was meant for processions, for dancers, for dryads, fauns, satyrs, and nymphs performing rituals and elaborate ceremonial. It also provided a splendid back-cloth suitable for statements of patriotism and noble sentiment, with miniature warships blazing away on the lake destroying the French with whom during Sir Francis's day Britain was so frequently at war. The garden created a theatrical background to a theatrical house.

The house provided a number of platforms for dramatic appearances, for music, for charades, for fancy dress rituals of every kind. Even the entrance to the library, regarded by most architectural historians as an amateur mistake because there is a difference in level created by the height of the saloon on the ground floor, is so used. The difference in level is overcome by a double flight of steps leading to a small platform that runs in front of the library doors—a perfect arrangement for a dramatic entrance in costume or for a local Emma Hamilton to strike Grecian attitudes.

The great terrace on the south front and the east and west porticoes were in a sense stages, always waiting for a performance. But there were more secret places still—up a small staircase at the eastern end of the house was the Masonic lodge, reached by a narrow staircase at the foot of which was a large dressing-up room—the pegs for costumes still remain; the lodge is large, the decoration partly Masonic symbols in the ceiling plaster and partly "egg and dart" dado, but with a difference—the eggs are quite suggestive of buttocks and the dart has an unusual shape and liveliness. There is an arch in the south wall and beyond that two further dressing-up rooms, doubtless for the robing of the dignitaries of the lodge. And, of course, the room may have been used for rites of a more intimate nature.

It would be totally wrong, however, to think that West Wycombe and its park, or indeed the notorious caves or the strange parish church were the work of a wild libertine, so besotted with the flesh and its pleasures that he had to make everything that he planned and built with scarcely disguised symbols of sensuality. Nor was he the trivial, drink-sodden youth whom Horace Walpole maligned. Dashwood certainly had a passion for art and architecture, for the theater and for costume, but he was a highly intelligent man of independent views. No wonder Benjamin Franklin became a close friend, indeed a collaborator; together they produced a *Revised Book of Common Prayer* for the Church of England, which had a profound influence on drawing up the *American Episcopal Prayer Book* after the separation of the two countries. They tried, too, to bring about a reunification of the two countries in 1770. Warm friends in politics, Franklin visited Dashwood and thought West Wycombe "a Paradise." Franklin, after all, was likely to respond to Dashwood's strong masculine and sensual tastes which, contrary to popular belief, do not inhibit a taste for art and beauty. Both took great delight in the instinctive life of man. Dashwood was as liberal in politics as in life and it is fitting that the great statue of William Penn which adorned his park is now in Philadelphia.

The young aristocracy of Dashwood's day had been freed from the guilts and soul-searchings of the seventeenth century that had haunted rakes such as the Earl of Rochester. Sir Francis was not alone in expressing the new freedom in his lifestyle or even in his house and garden. What is unique is the survival of as much of his work. The little that was added to it by his stepbrother, Sir John Dashwood-King, himself a Knight of Sir Francis of Wycombe, and a monk of Medmenham merely embellished what Sir Francis created, with discreet temples and follies for further pleasures in the garden. All have lasted and survived sufficiently for the present Sir Francis to resurrect one of England's greatest and most original eighteenth-century gardens.

At a more scholarly level, West Wycombe makes a profound statement about the Enlightenment and its expression. Franklin adored it and so would Diderot have done; it breathes the freedom of living and earthly joy, which is what the Enlightenment was all about. □

Editor: Beatrice Monti della Corte

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TWO THOUSAND

(Continued from page 147) abouts is unknown, or who may refuse to agree with the others to sell; some such person owned the central slice of this ruin, and maybe a bit of the air above it.

We drove on. Round a final bend at the end of the corkscrew, on the far side of the hill, the road straightened out and ran along a flat valley or narrow plain with the mountains in the distance ahead of us and on either side. To our right were fields with a few scattered olive trees, *cannes de Provence* (a kind of bamboo characteristic of the area), and a lot of sunburnt grass, thistles, weeds, scrub. We soon came to a dirt track leading past a ruin which was the mere broken shell of a small, long-abandoned farmhouse, of the kind called here a *mas*. The ruin consisted of about six crumbling and broken-down walls. There was no sign of a roof except for a single decaying beam, bare to the winds. A rampant fig tree, blackberries, elderberry, ivy, and nettles were growing up inside the walls out of floors which were earth and stones.

We explored these remains of a farmhouse, one wing of which was where the family had lived, the other, at a slightly lower level, the *bergerie,* home of sheep and goats huddled up that close to their owners. The back of the farmhouse consisted of one wall running the whole length of it, windowless, and now ivy-mantled. This has protected the human and animal occupants of the *mas* from the prevailing north wind, the mistral. It is the mistral and not just the painter's madness which causes cypresses in Van Gogh's paintings to look like green-black whirling, writhing madmen. For this part of Provence is Van Gogh country with strata of rocks running parallel, overlapping each other, like waves hewn out of stone, foliage like knots of living flame, deep-blue or burning-yellow skies flecked with whitest cloud, and fields of stubble prickly as a peasant's unshaved cheek.

From the front of the ruin (where we were to construct a terrace) we looked across a small field which had once been a vineyard, with, at the far end, a hedge consisting of wild-cherry trees, *cannes de Provence,* and shrubs. Beyond the hedge there was a steep bank descending into an olive orchard; and, beyond the orchard, a little valley with a gully running through the bottom. And from this valley across an apricot orchard, the mountainside rose steeply through stone and scrub and many wild flowers to a skyline of rocks, jagged, straight and curling, carved out by the centennial mistral to a profile as elegant, when seen from our terrace, as the scroll of an old violin. Our view up to this skyline is of a screen of pine trees in front of a screen of rock, beyond that, another screen of pine trees, and beyond them, the farthest screen of rock. Slightly theatrical, it seems the work of some master stage designer, like a Chinese or Japanese watercolor of just such a rocky landscape.



Sir Stephen Spender in front of the cozy living-room fireplace.

Although "our mountain," as we were already beginning to call it, seemed quite far away, actually it takes only about half an hour's walk from "our house" to reach the farthest ridge, culminating in a crest the shape of a cock's comb. Standing there on the skyline, there is the great surprise. The mountainside drops almost vertically down to the immense plain. Between us and the sea there are no more mountains, except for the final outthrust of ours, stretching across the plain like a vast dragon's tail and finally disappearing into it, where no doubt it continues for a bit, extending underground.

Ours was, we discovered, the only ruin in the district which it was still possible to buy. Although lying only three miles equidistant from the villages of Mouries and Maussane—indeed, only five miles from Baumanière—one of the starriest of three-star restaurants in France—at the famous historic site of Les Baux, on its great fortified rock—many people seemed to think that we had chosen a house in a very remote area. Nevertheless, as soon as we could arrange to do so, we bought it, with the little field in front, for approximately five hundred dollars. Natasha christened our ruin Mas de St. Jerome; our landscape reminded her of some Italian primitive of St. Jerome in his hermitage, sitting or standing in a rocky desert. We immediately approached the local builder, M. Lopez, a charming man with smiling eyes and an alert expression on his lined tanned features under his black beret. Like many people in that part of Provence, M. Lopez is half French, half Spanish, or Catalan. He made at this time a special business of restoring ruins. Essentially, the art of restoration is to pick up the stones one by one from where they are scattered (some of ours had been torn apart during the war when the Germans used this ruin for target practice) and to put them back where they had first been put in 1816 when, some numbers carved on a stone informed us, the *mas* had been built.

Natasha, who is a musician, did all the planning of the architecture; she worked proportions out on squared paper. I think that being a musician must have helped her divide a given space into intervals.

The traditional Provençal style we admired was the use of building material which belonged to the landscape: the rough-hewn stones of unequal sizes cemented into walls in the style called the *pierres apparentes,* the pale dried-rose-colored roof tiles, and the cut slabs of honey-colored stone for the chimney piece in our living room, and for the door frames and embrasures of windows. In my view, the most beautiful feature of the house is the floor tiles, made at an *artisanat* near Apt—square in the living room, hexagonal in the kitchen, interlocking clover patterns in the bedrooms in the *bergerie.* In the dining room the tiles come from Vallauris, where Picasso had his pottery made. They are a highly enameled



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blood red, quite unlike the other tiles, which retain their clay texture. In fact, we had the idea of them from Château Mouton, where our friend Pauline de Rothschild had used them in a white, red, and gold corridor. They strike a note of luxuriousness which some might find incongruous in our modest house.

To get the tiles established so that they do not become stained or dirtied, they need to be waxed over a period of several weeks during which time Natasha was, it seemed to me, forever shooing me away from wherever in the kitchen or living room I happened to be standing. I see now that the shooing was worthwhile, for the tiles have a mirroring gleam within their dappled pink-brown-gold, like that of tiles in an interior painted by Vermeer.

The ingenious patterns of interlocking tiles derive from ancient Roman designs, as do the forms of our Provençal pottery—plates and bowls and kitchen earthenware in yellow ocher or a deep ivy green. We have a wonderful double-handled glossy black cup, used for serving sauces—often the local sweet vanilla sauces—of a design like that of cups found in Etruscan tombs. For at every point in Provence one touches on ancient Rome—not just in the many ruins like those of the Triumphal Arch on the outskirts of St. Rémy, and the Roman arena and Roman Theater at Arles, but in the cooking utensils, indeed the very stones.

The results of Natasha's juggling with spaces to put within already given areas were four bedrooms, the kitchen, the dining room (both smaller than we would really have liked, owing to structural walls of great thickness), a large downstairs living and music room, where the *bergerie* had been, with a great arched window from ceiling to floor and across almost the whole width of the room, looking out on the view of the garden in the foreground and mountain skyline in the background; and, upstairs in the main part of the house, my workroom with two windows that look across the same view. From here, at this elevation, the view seems different from the way it looks through the living-room window, a kind of exaltation of it.

Natasha's great passion was for planning the garden, perhaps because making the desert flower presented such a challenge. First, the soil had to be improved, by planting vetch and plowing it in, for three years. Then the garden, like the house, had to be protected from the mistral. We planted a row of knee-high cypresses along one side of a field adjoining the one in front of the house. They are now over twenty feet high and writhe madly in the Van Gogh wind, but the garden below them is sheltered.

Natasha's idea was to place between us and our mountain background a foreground melting into the surrounding nature, introducing into it some more cultivated plants, many of them transported from England. Those with which we succeeded best were potentilla, cistus, santolinas, and many sorts of species buddleia. Immediately in front of the row of cypresses, Natasha constructed a walk of white flowering shrubs and oleanders, on one side of which we put stone seats. This path leads to an enclosed square with a wall and garden seat at the back shaded by four umbrella pines, one at each corner. We placed in the center an urn of terra cotta which our friend David Plante, the young American novelist, had, in a fit of wild enthusiasm, copied from a postcard he had seen of a Mycenaean urn in the British Museum. His first and almost last essay in pottery. It is quite beautiful.

Natasha laid out the garden during several years when we had almost no water except some collected from rainfall on the roof, into a cistern. Now that we have made a new well, her ambitions are getting a bit out of hand. She plans to have, next year, a rectangular herb garden with a fountain in the middle, and more trees and shrubs of the kind that can only be found in English nurseries transported, with their health certificates attached, when we go to pick our olive harvest in the fall. Some roses do spectacularly well in the Provençal climate and the limy soil; for example, La Follette, which blooms in early April and, blooming later, Filipes Kiftsgate, Brunoni La Mortola, and the Cherokee rose which we planted with nostalgic memories of wonderful gardens we have seen in South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee.

Provence is, above all, the seasons and the weather. The mistral is liable to blow during all seasons, but most of all in the winter. The weather goes on being beautiful up until Christmas or early January. The summer can be very hot, especially in July and the first part of August. Already in the second half of August, and still more in September, there are intimations of autumn: an extraordinary stillness and clarity as though every rock and every leaf were enclosed in crystal which, in contrast with the oppressive summer airlessness, has a touch of ice in it, an extraordinary cool purity. The season of olive picking, which traditionally starts on All Saints' Day, is usually beautiful, for in Provence there is slanting sunlight at a time when Tuscany, as well as England, is gray and wet. Christmas, too, is brilliant, luncheon out on the terrace, evenings by a log fire in the living room. January and February can sometimes be biting cold and windy, but even then there can be bright days, anticipating spring. One thing about the mistral is that it brings clear skies and sunshine, blowing away all clouds. It makes the tubular stems and scimitar-shaped leaves of the *cannes de Provence* and the greenish-gray sky-mirroring olive trees glisten like spun glass.

Already in January there is almond blossom, followed by early iris, jasmin, and mimosa. In late March there are yellow Canary Bird roses, wild periwinkles growing at the edge of the little driveway behind the house, bearded iris in the front garden, and then the opulent La Follette roses. Soon after, the cherries and apricots start blossoming in orchards which are carpeted with yellow marigolds. In May the cherries begin to ripen and soon it is a race against time to eat or boil and bottle them before they fall from the trees. This happens again in June and July with the apricots which, besides being eaten raw, have to be made into jam, chutney sauce, or apricot cheese, all within a few weeks. We are grateful if the apricot season is not too good.

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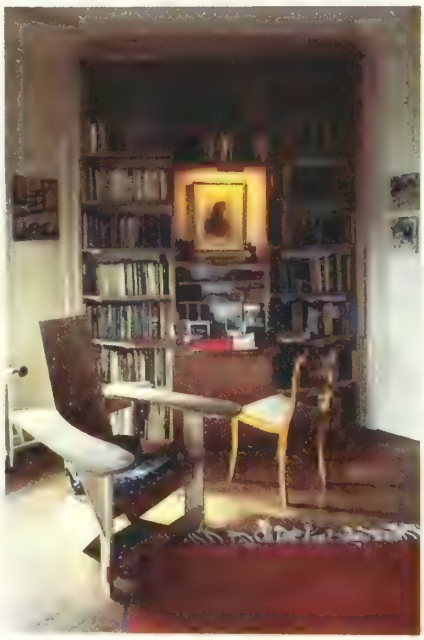
While I rather dread the hottest days of summer, they are redeemed for me by the darting small lizards and the occasional dragonish bright copper-green large ones: still more by the butterflies which gather to the buddleias and lavender: many varieties of swallowtails, fritillaries, peacocks, marble blacks, and—very rare today though common enough when I was a child—the scarlet-and-black red admirals. Most of all I am enchanted by the miraculous hummingbird moths exactly like the minutest of real hummingbirds, which hover with whirring propellerlike wings in front of lavender and dart into the depths of flowers with long tubular proboscises.

It took us about two years to build our house, doing so during the months each year when we were in Provence, and far longer—between seven and fifteen years—to get amenities such as electricity, the telephone, and plenty of water. I suspect that there is something about building a ruin which impresses itself on one's memory even more than building a brand new house from scratch. One struggles with the form imposed by the given structure like a child struggling with parental influence. Every stage of the conflict becomes imprinted on one's soul. I feel I know St. Jerome like my own life history, and Natasha, since she did all the work, must feel this even more than I do. There is also something about the excessive weather, dramatic landscape, above all the mistral, which makes one feel that the house is like a life that one has planted here in a landscape sometimes welcoming, sometimes alien—like St. Jerome in his hermitage in the rocky desert. Or, to change the metaphor, one can feel during the mistral, which turns all the vegetation into green waves and streaming branches, that the house is a ship with a very cozy interior and cabin windows looking out onto a roaring ocean. At those times I find the contrast here between indoors and outdoors, my quiet study and my view, calm or stormy, from my window, inspiring. □

JOAN MITCHELL: ART AND LIFE AT VÉTHEUIL

(Continued from page 195) glimpse of the terraced garden beyond. A rather beautiful Provincial table and heavy, carved chest stood against the long wall of this room, called the Billiard Room because of the presence of a billiard table, at present weighed down with sheet music, books, and a few suitcases. Suddenly, the silence erupted into a wild cacophony of barking. Taking my courage, and my suitcase, in my hands, I advanced toward a green door at the head of a staircase at the far end of the room, opened the door, and walked forward. Iva, the German shepherd, and her two daughters, Marion and Madaleine, came bounding toward me, giving mixed signals, tails wagging but still barking furiously. Then, just as suddenly, the noise subsided, the canine sea parted, and Joan appeared at the end of the corridor; we embraced. I had arrived.

Three days earlier, in Paris, at Joan Mitchell's most recent exhibition at the Galerie Jean Fournier, I had been struck, as I always am at Mitchell's shows, by the extraordinary range of expressive variation this artist manages to achieve within an *oeuvre* marked by such unmistakable stylistic unity. Certainly the strongest and most consistent painter of her generation of Abstract Expressionists, Mitchell's recent paintings daringly play out that dangerous but exhilarating game of chaos versus order that marks the best abstract art of our time. The Fournier exhibition, which included both individual canvases and diptychs, is entitled "La Grande Vallée." This phrase constitutes a reference to a state of feeling rather than the description of a specific place. It is at once an evocation of childhood memory and adult loss; simultaneously it suggests the devastating yet illuminating passage of time as it effects art and nature. For Mitchell, such titles often grow out of the work-process itself, constituting the painter's own emotional reaction to her creation rather than preceding its existence. Yet it is hard to dissociate Mitchell's paintings from the world of nature; indeed, her canvases are potent evocations of the landscape experience, suggesting the scenic without ever imitating it. At their best, her canvases can be understood as metaphors of the natural world, in which the energy of organic growth makes its perpetual assault on the underlying structure of natural order.



In the library, chair after Bugatti design and an early Matisse over the desk.

Light plays a major role in this process of landscape evocation. In the most striking diptych in the recent show, brilliant slashing and curving strokes of luminous yellow, glowing orange, and blazing red pigment played against the intense blues and greens at the bottom of the canvases to create a dazzling effect, as though the

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paintings were giving off the noonday radiance of sun on water and foliage. Mitchell never paints to the edge, and this strategy serves at once to destroy any semblance of representation and to maintain the integrity of the flat white support as the positive space of art, not the negative one of illusion.

The density of the paint structure also serves to remind us that for this artist, the act of painting is rooted in the nature of the materials. For Mitchell, the medium is always oil—thick, viscous, infinitely malleable; never dry, inert, synthetic paint. The range of texture may run from the thinnest wash to the heaviest impasto, an impasto inflected with a whole range of thicknesses and subtextures.

Sitting with Joan in the lovely, rambling garden behind the house, we talk about her life and her art. She began splitting her time between France and the United States in 1955, and moved her studio from Paris to Vétheuil in 1969. Although she maintains that she feels at home nowhere—and I believe her—paradoxically, this place is marked by her presence, shaped to a remarkable degree by her way of life. It is a life dedicated, in the most stringent way possible, to the creation of art.

Joan Mitchell is, on her own terms, an extraordinarily disciplined artist. She doesn't get up until after noon and goes to bed at four or five in the morning: her working time is late afternoon and the night. For recreation, she gardens—sometimes weeding at night with the outdoor lights on; reads, watches television, listens to music, which she loves, feeds the dogs promptly at 5:30 every evening. Typically, there will be an afternoon period of working: either actual painting, looking over a canvas in progress, or checking the work of the previous night against the daylight. "If it works in daylight, it will work in artificial light," she says. It takes her about two months to complete a painting, and, although she sometimes works on several canvases at a time, she basically concentrates on only one.

As we walk through the garden to the studio, I ask her, "How do you start a painting?" realizing that this is a naïve question, but really wanting to know. Joan laughs, and half jokingly, half seriously replies that sometimes it's simply that she happens to have a lot of one color—say, blue—and she decides to start with that. Or sometimes it's a photograph; or sometimes, something from the garden: recently sunflowers, especially dying sunflowers; or sometimes, it's simply what she describes as "color-feelings" from the garden, rather than the inspiration of any particular flower or image. At other times, she gets involved in the space of the river or the sky, or, she corrects herself, "space-feelings," the way the blueness of the sky comes through the trees, for instance. In the process of painting, though, the original image that started the work is enormously changed. "Once I start, the painting is telling *me* what to do. It takes over. Sometimes I have the feeling I didn't paint it. That's when I'm really working; when I forget myself."

We enter the spacious studio, where the diptych Mitchell is presently working on leans against the wall. Nearby is a rainbow agglomeration of muffin tins that serves her as a palette, and cans holding brushes soaking in turpentine. Color goes onto the canvas with a brush. The palette knife is used only to remove paint from the canvas. Mitchell works on diptychs—two-part paintings—or quadriptychs—four-part

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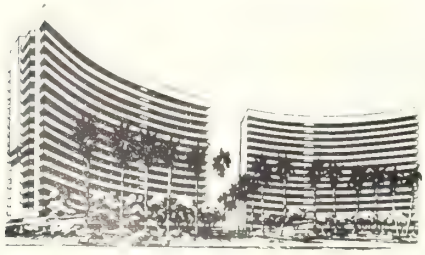
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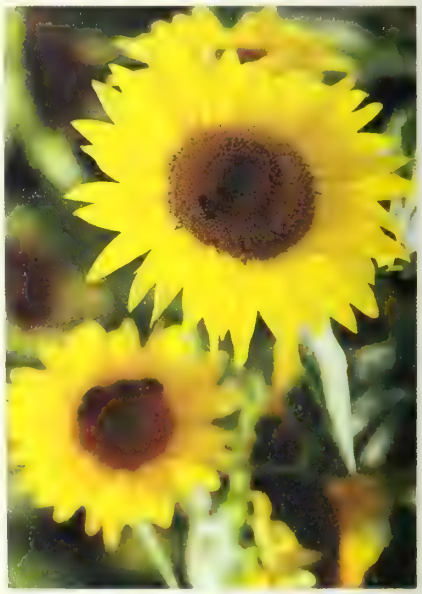
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ones—to increase the scale of her paintings. In the case of the diptychs, she works on both canvases as a unit, but nevertheless, "feels their two-ness" in the process. Edges are always important for her, empty space arrived at with a sense of finality.

"How do you decide when a painting is finished?"

"When *it* decides," Joan Mitchell answers. Often in a painting, she says, there's some element that you want to save and you go with it; but exactly that thing you wanted to save may ultimately have to be destroyed. "You never know until the end."

We walk back to the house through the garden, brilliant with its yellow coreopsis, its purple violets, the fuzzy pink of valerian, the smooth, deep rose of petunias; rich blue salvia, white carnations and bright red vervains make a



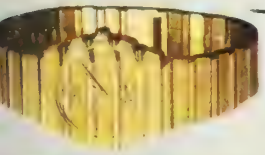
Colors of local flowers have influenced Mitchell's palette.

kind of tricolor effect. Lower down, closer to the house are stalks of morning-glory—blue-violet and pale blue—and bluets. The bright orange of marigolds mingles with the slightly muted tone of African daisies. Joan and her friend and helper, the young composer Gisèle Barreaux, laughingly come to my assistance in my floral ignorance, trying to translate the French names into English.

We move over to the more formal "white tie" garden, as Joan calls it, with its neat circle of yucca and peonies in the center. Beyond this is an ample



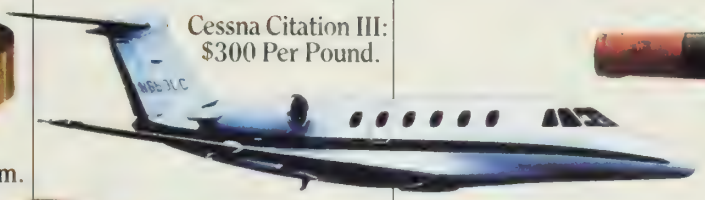
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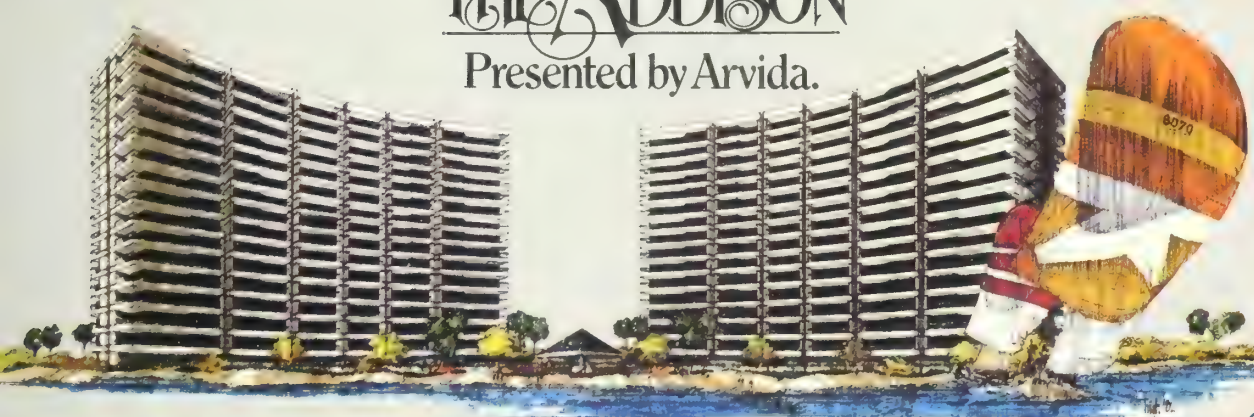
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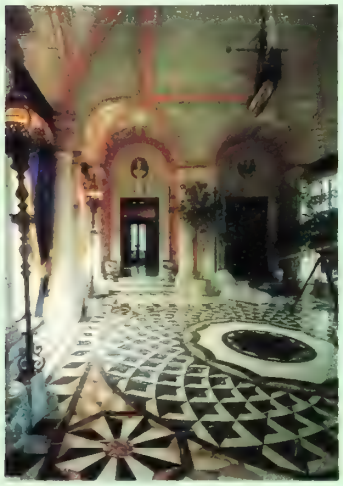
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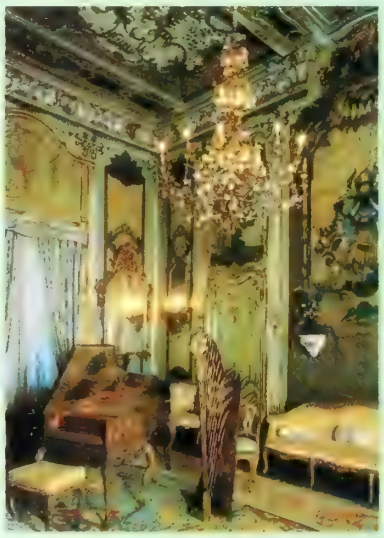
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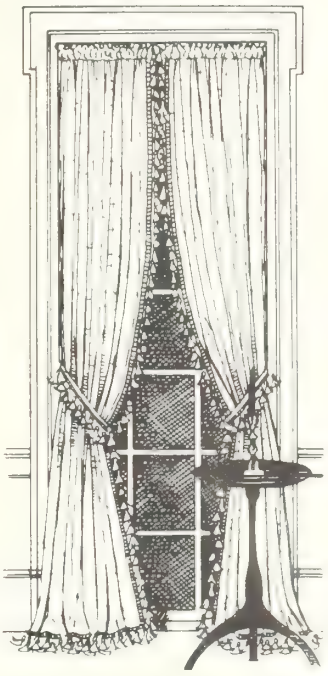


vegetable garden, with precise rows of squash, beans, tomatoes, and American corn. Monet painted the poppy fields behind the vegetable garden, but the fields have now been transformed into a cemetery. From the vegetable garden one has a splendid view of the little Gothic church of Vétheuil, towering protectively over the houses of the village, a motif cherished by Monet and perhaps serving him as a miniature predecessor for his later *Rouen Cathedral* series. The property also includes a small orchard, mainly old apple trees with roses growing around them. It is here that Gisèle has her piano in a tiny studio embroidered with mimosa over the doorway, made fragrant by a honeysuckle vine clinging to the wall nearby. Violet campanulas and enormous orange poppies mingle in the border of the orchard, and the light here is truly extraordinary: an ever-shifting transparency of silver and gold.

In the big house at Vétheuil, it is the views from the windows that inevitably draw one's attention, both in the dining room and sitting rooms on the main floor, furnished with Spartan yet satisfying utilitarianism; and in the most interesting and articulated room in the house, the octagonal library on the second floor of the tower, which has windows on four sides, books from floor to ceiling—art books, novels, poetry—a gun collection, and a large TV set. A Matisse charcoal drawing of a nude over the desk, and a beautiful little de Kooning pastel sketch for *Woman* hangs opposite the Matisse, next to dog photographs and some fine, severe, anonymous nineteenth-century family portraits—from Cincinnati, on her mother's side, Joan tells me.

"Is the river important for your work?" I ask this American transplanted from Chicago, this woman who established a major reputation in New York during the fifties, and of whom a recent review (merely one in a series of rave notices responding to her Paris show) in the *International Herald Tribune* declares: "Joan Mitchell is one of the most important contemporary painters living and working in France." I am looking out at the Seine, and of course thinking of Monet who painted it, the countryside around Vétheuil, and the town itself many times over in the years between 1878 and 1881. A bronze plaque marks the faded orange stucco cottage with bright green shutters directly beneath us, from the windows of which Monet could look out at a view of the Seine almost, if not exactly, identical to the one we had this afternoon. "Certainly," says Joan, "the river is a big item of awareness." But then again, she adds, she has always loved water, lived near it. As a child it was Lake Michigan; and then there was the view she had when she lived on the Brooklyn side of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1947, just on the site of the present River Café—those meant a lot too. Once more, Mitchell brings home the fact that her work can never be understood in terms of the simple "inspiration" provided by a single element—not even the river. Although her painting has often been compared to that of Monet, usually with the benign aim of elevating it to the pantheon of great Modernist creators, it seems to me that the comparison is ultimately a misleading one. Rather, what is significant is the *difference* between what Mitchell and Monet, living in the same spot but with different backgrounds and at unassimilable moments in history, created when they looked at the landscape before them. Monet's paintings at Vétheuil were, in fact, nothing like Mitchell's. Painted at a time of major crisis in his personal and professional life, brought to a climax by the death of his wife, Camille, in 1879, they are most memorably harsh, wintry scenes, painted with a livid, neutral palette in broken angular brush strokes: representations of the breakup of ice floes on the river, which are "Débacles" in both the literal and the expressive, figurative sense of the term. In the spring of 1879, he wrote from Vétheuil: "I am absolutely discouraged, neither seeing, nor hoping for any future!"

In Mitchell's canvases, the brilliant colors, which evoke but never imitate the flowers, grass, trees, and water of the place, the powerful and delicate brushwork, and the moving riskiness of her pictorial vision are all her own; they belong unmistakably to the latter

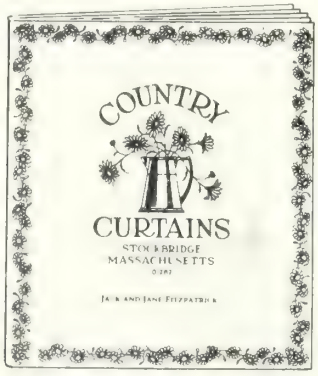


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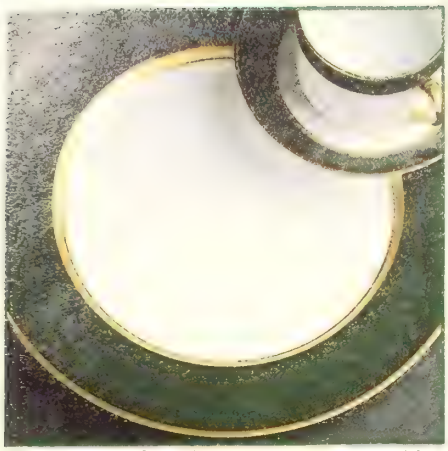
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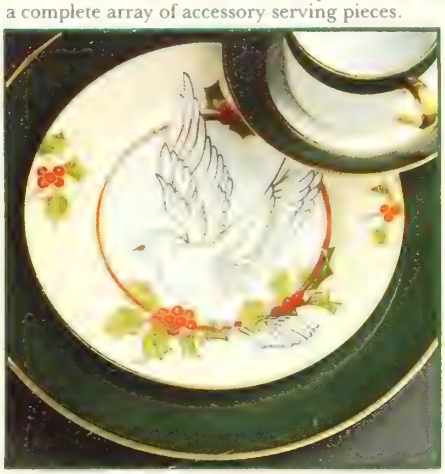
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JOAN MITCHELL: ART AND LIFE AT VÉTHEUIL

part of the twentieth century. If there is anything that the two artists may share, looking out at the river peaceably winding its way through the landscape near Vétheuil with a century between them, it is something less tangible than a similar motif or a common style, something harder to locate or to put into words, but nevertheless essential to the creation of truly innovative art. Perhaps it is that combination of inner discipline and energy which makes the artist rise up like a phoenix from adversity, pushing onward, like the river, in the day-to-day business of making paintings. □ *Editor: Karen Lee Grant*

ILLUSIONS OF GRANDEUR

(Continued from page 160) to one after another of the leading lights of the then-ascendant Abstract Expressionist movement. Haas himself was well aware that something wasn't right. "I found the look of Abstract Expressionism," Haas later recalled, "but never really 'felt' it." Instead, he eventually moved toward representational art, first constructing small diorama boxes based on interiors from the paintings of van Eyck and Vermeer. The fact that his new direction was more fulfilling to him than prevailing art-world practice led to profound feelings of conflict. "I couldn't justify my boxes in the avant garde . . . but I was having a hell of a good time making them [I was] a Jekyll and Hyde artist. It was almost as if I had been a modernist abstractionist by day and a private realist by night."

The decisive turn came when Haas commenced on his first studies of cast-iron façades in SoHo in 1969, a year after he had begun renting a loft there, which he used during his breaks from teaching art at Bennington College in Vermont. Those drawings and etchings show his now-familiar style almost fully evolved. In each, the artist's decisive visual editing and cropping gives the image a compositional originality that transcends mere copying. Haas's lifelong interest in building design found new expression in what thereafter became his primary subject matter: architecture.

Haas continued to make boxes—including *Frank Lloyd Wright in His Spring Green Studio* and *Gertrude Stein in Her Dining Room*—but soon came to the inevitable next step of tackling full-scale interiors. He began, sensibly enough, on the walls of his own Greene Street studio, painting trompe-l'oeil detailing around a fireplace and windows, adding a cornice of sham dentils, and winding up with the single most spectacular stroke: a false perspective of the view that would be visible from the studio if a rectangular portion of the outer wall were ripped away.

Just down the street, his slightly earlier Prince and Greene Street mural (part of the memorable City Walls program) was attracting the attention of the art world at large as curators, collectors, and the idly curious made the rounds of the galleries in the neighborhood that had become the new center for avant-garde art in New York. But it was also visible to the truck drivers, porters, and factory personnel who worked there. This was the first instance of what has become an important factor in the art of Richard Haas: it



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is seen as often by people who don't follow art as by the cognoscenti.

As a case in point, two of his current commissions—immense schemes for warehouses in St. Louis and Chicago, both adjacent to busy freeways—will be viewed by literally millions of people each week. Of course, many who are confronted by one of Haas's trompe-l'oeil tours de force are not aware that its surfaces are actually painted rather than carved in stone or cast in concrete. But that is both the conundrum and the confirmation of his art, which above all tries to break down what this artist sees as the artificial boundaries between architecture, painting, and sculpture.

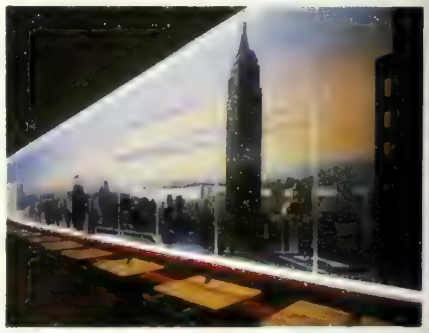
Haas is challenged by the changing circumstances of his artistic process. Although his outdoor murals from the start have been executed by professional billboard painters working from his detailed maquettes and color specifications, for quite some time the development of those designs remained in his hands alone. Now, though, that his volume of work has exceeded what even the most diligent artist could be expected to handle by himself, Haas oversees a large workshop of assistants who carry out the huge amount of detail work that goes into each of his projects. His participation has become increasingly conceptual and managerial, as he orchestrates his staff in a way that has ironically come to resemble more the office practice of an architect than the studio of a modern painter.

Thus at the age of 48, Richard Haas finds himself faced with the paradoxical problems of success. "Over the past four or five years," he explains, "seventy to eighty percent of my activity has come from commissions. I once spent only half my time on commissions and the other half doing whatever I wanted to, but I find that I now have to take sabbaticals from myself. That's what I'm learning to do—to create free time to change, to grow, and to introduce new ideas."

One of his favorite ways of doing so is through travel, and in recent years he has made extensive trips to the Near East, Far East, and India with his wife, the sculptor Katherine Sokolnikoff. It was his wanderings as a young man through Bavaria, the Tyrol, and along the Ligurian Coast of Italy that first opened Haas's eyes to the rich tradition of trompe-l'oeil painted architecture. But if the application of what he has seen lately in more exotic cultures has thus far not been as visible in his work as those early influences, it is certain that the impressions made on him by Karnak or Fatehpur Sikri will not be lost, for virtually every exceptional structure that he sees becomes grist for his unceasing visual mill.

Much attention has been directed lately toward affecting a closer working relationship between artists and architects. Regrettably, most of those efforts—epitomized by the generally dismal outcome of the artist/architect pairings in The Architectural League of New York's 1981 "Collaboration" show—have been little more than shotgun marriages. In truth, Richard Haas working alone can make a far more satisfying synthesis of the arts than most tandems in which one participant or the other is constantly striving to gain the upper hand.

Even though Haas has already at-





Top: A sham panorama in the basement cafeteria of the Philip Morris Building in New York. *Above:* Haas's Times Square tower at left was recently demolished.

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tained his aim of unity with virtually unparalleled success, he still dreams of a closer integration, a *Gesamtkunstwerk,* the "total art work" that has been the elusive goal of creators over the centuries. Given his experience, enthusiasm, and essential equanimity, it is quite possible that Haas will eventually be able to reforge the coalition among artist, architect, and artisan.

Whether or not he will be able to bring about his concert of the media, it is certain that Richard Haas has already added significantly to the enrichment of our art and architecture. One measure of that can be made if we apply the standard that the artist himself wrote about in describing the older architecture of American cities. "What was left of the past looked precarious but often more beautiful, more human, more evidently the result of craftsmanship than the new." One day not long from now the need to preserve the incomparable artifacts of Richard Haas ought to bring forth that very same response. □

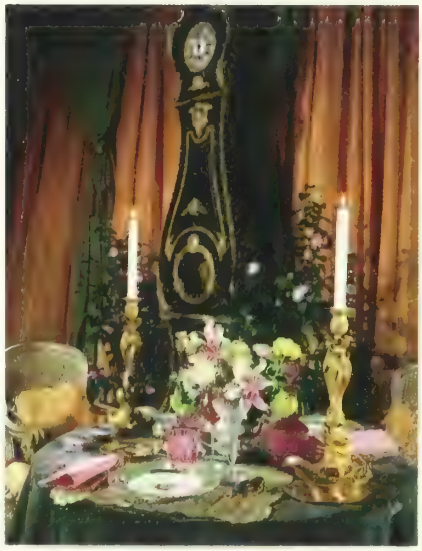
IF YOU KNEW SUZY

(Continued from page 142*)* only about its old-breed fresco-figures but about the new-breed aristocrats: fashion designers, cosmetics tycoons, sports figures, movie stars—in other words, names that make news. "I do a people column, and I was doing it long before a magazine took that name for itself. I write about *many* people who could never in a million years be called social," she says. "If they're flamboyant enough, gifted enough, eccentric enough, attractive enough, powerful enough, or just plain rich enough, they can get into the column."

That column is a sustained and cumulative performance—running five days a week in the New York *Daily News* since 1967, and widely syndicated—and Suzy manages to keep it perpetually replenished with fresh names. "We all need a little bit of expansion and we all need a little bit of variety, including *me,*" she says. Nor does she write for the sacrosanct few. "I try to write for everyone and to bring to my readers a feeling of what this kind of life is like."

Suzy's refreshingly irreverent style, perfected over the long years of her career, has not gone unremarked. Norman Mailer and William F. Buckley Jr. are among her writer fans. And Truman Capote said: "She is one of only two or three columnists who ever wrote well. She makes each of her columns a little short story with a moral commentary at the end." It has even been claimed that if a piece of her copy were washed ashore anywhere in the Western world, soaked with the spume and spray of gossip, the style would be instantly recognizable as hers.

Suzy's column may be society's Sacred Text but it is also a tongue-in-cheek Court Circular in which everyone does not always look his or her best. Love of high society has not blinkered her to its lows and limitations. Although she once described herself as "the champion of the overprivileged," her attitude toward them has more dimension than that: the Suzy who rides beside those social avatars in their chariots is often chiding them that "pomp is mortal."



Aileen Mehle's table set for dinner

The world of gossipmongering has never been known for its decency, yet she delivers the goods to her readers without exploiting the closeted secrets of people's lives. Her friend Walter Annenberg calls her the "bloodless surgeon," because she operates but never draws blood. "I'm also quite generous with the anesthetic," she laughs. " 'Fair' is the important word in my vocabulary. Sure I touch on the scandals and feuds, but I do have a code. I mean, I know a lot about everyone but I go only so far. For instance, I never write about a husband cheating. Absolutely not—he's married. But the minute he's separated, I have him in my column. The second he moves out!" It is her sense of fairness, along with her talent and credibility, that has made her such a welcome guest everywhere. Keyholes are open to anyone, but all doors are open to her. And she enters with a certain assumption of power. "I never work a room," she says. "The room works me."

Aileen Mehle works all day at home in a setting every bit as opulent as the ones Suzy visits at night and writes about for the next edition. The house she lives in was put up around 1914 by the furniture Sloanes, who had already built themselves one or two other substantial town houses in the stony heart of Manhattan's Upper East Side.

The drawing room of her duplex apartment was the original ballroom, and sitting in one of her brocade satin-and-cut-velvet chairs one can almost hear the elaborate steps of some immemorial cotillion. The fireplace is eighteenth-century and ornately carved, with an antique smoked mirror over it; flanking the mantel are two huge oils taken from tapestries—both after Boucher. "One is Europa," she explains, "with all her luscious, full-breasted handmaidens attending her, and the white cow or bull or whatever, and all the little cherubs running around like crazy. And the other is Diana, the huntress, with the hunting dog and—of course, again—the bare breast."

Over by the windows are two tables, one draped in bottle-green velvet, the

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other in dusty pink, both fringed at the bottom. Lurking beneath them: case upon case of Dom Pérignon. People, you see, send Suzy presents. "The most surprising people, too," adds one of her friends. "I mean people who *she* thinks should know better, because she doesn't mention them in her column for what she's going to get out of it. She's incorruptible." Aileen Mehle explains, "I *have* to put the excess champagne under those tables, I ran out of cupboard space."

Against one of the mirrored walls at the far end of the drawing room is the oversize day bed, covered in "a heavenly shade of blue silk damask," on which she has often been photographed—"lying on the cushions as though I didn't do a *thing*," she laughs. "This was my bed in my previous apartment, but my bedroom here, up on the second floor, was too small to accommodate it, so my friend Valerian Rybar said, 'Put it in the living room.' "

Much of the rest of her furniture also followed her from her old apartment. The green silk faille draperies had to be custom-made for the high drawing-room windows. The rug was made in Portugal. "When I first saw it, I cried," Aileen Mehle confesses. "I think I'd expected something pink and blue with little dainty bow-knots. I wasn't expecting anything so vivid, and when I saw those coral flowers coming out at me I broke into tears. Valerian said, 'The reason you don't like the rug is because it wasn't in your mind's eye. Just wait until tomorrow.' And he was right, because the next day I fell madly in love with it. All I had to do was look at it twice.

"I had to buy other things for this apartment, too," she continues. "Such as a chandelier. I already had loads of chandeliers, of course, but not one of them was worthy of hanging in the center of this drawing room."

The chandelier that hangs in Aileen Mehle's bedroom is off-center, striking an eccentric note in an apartment where everything else is symmetrical. "I'll tell you the story of my little off-center chandelier," she offers, already laughing. "It was given to me by a friend I loved, but when I moved here, there was absolutely no place to put it. You know, many of my chandeliers I had to sell, because I didn't have room for them, but I said to myself I would never part with this one. So I said to Valerian, 'We've got to hang it in the bedroom.' And he said, 'There's no place to hang it because there's a big beam right in the center of the ceiling and if you hang it on that, it'll be right in your face.' Which was true. So I said, 'Well, let's put it over on the side.' And he said, 'The side? That will look so terrible. It will look like a showroom.' So then I said, 'Well, let's hang it on the beam, anyhow.' And he came by after it was hung and he said, 'I don't mind it there. But it *is* pretty low. If someone comes up here, won't it hit his head?' And I just looked at him and said, 'Anybody smart enough to get in here in the first place is smart enough to duck.' "

The apartment's original bedroom is now her office. Here, in the same corner as a Louis XV chaise longue and on the same floor as the major chandelier, sits Suzy's word processor, through which are filtered the complex capillaries of the whole social body. For here in this pale-coral-strié-walled social-central-intelligence station she writes her column every day immediately after rising around eleven. "I turn on the telephone," she says, "and from then on it's just phone phone phone doorbell doorbell doorbell write write write talk talk talk and that's it until my hairdresser, Sebou, comes over to get me ready and then I get dressed and go out and my evenings and days all flow into each other."

During the day, she functions without the gossip columnist's lifelines—secretaries, stringers, telephone answering machines, answering services. "Suppose I have an answering service," she says, "and I come back and I've been gone for a couple of hours. 'Hello, did anybody call me?' 'Oh, yes, you have fifty calls.' Now *what* am I going to do with fifty phone calls? They'll all call back."

Aileen Mehle is as cavalier about her entertaining as she is about her telephoning. She rarely has people in. She doesn't have to. Of course, she has the perfect "out": she *is* out every night. "If I do have anybody over, it's my closest friends, and if I'm lucky they'll ask for champagne and caviar and I can get rid of some of that inventory."

Just who are Suzy's friends? "Well," she replies, "start with this country and you can say the Reagans. I've known

nem for fifteen years and I admire and espect them—I always have, not just ince he became President and she became our First Lady. I thought Nancy vas a first lady even before she was irst Lady.

"Or start with *everybody* in *every* ountry—you know, if you want to tart with *kings* and that kind of ning. . . I go to all the parties, all the est parties in all the really good counries. When I go to England, I go to the alaces. When I'm in Venice, I go to ne *palazzos.* When I'm in Spain, I go to ne *palacios.* When I'm in France, I go o the *châteaux,* but since it turned soialist there's not much to do in rance—they don't have those big alls any more. And when I'm in Holwood, I go to Betsy Bloomingdale's. ll the Hollywood people are more or ss my friends, too. Cary Grant always ays, 'Everyone should be like *you* in ne newspaper business.' Well, I mean, vho *don't* I know? I'm trying to think f who don't I know."

Despite these whirlwind comings nd goings in "all the really good counies," and though she can hardly be aid to be in natural contact with the vhole of the social condition, Aileen Iehle never lets herself get carried way. "Look, I know what I do," she ays. "I write a gossip column, a fancy ossip column. If it's amusing, that's all intend—to entertain, to fulfill a few ntasies. □

NOBLE SPACES

Continued from page 123) every reign f France since Louis XIII and every epublic—also began to crowd him ut. "You could barely move—so vhat I did was done up until the midle of the nineteenth century: push all ne furniture back against the wall and ull it out as needed."

The "truffled" marble floor of the rst room (discovered under endless ayers of linoleum) now gives way to arquet de Versailles that has been tripped and varnished. After the soriety of the first room we move on to a nore playful mood. Five chandeliers anging from ropes (boating rope ainted red ocher) look as though



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they're about to go up and down—like a stage set for a ball in an Italian theater. "When I discovered those hooks under plaster acanthus leaves in the ceiling, I had five matching chandeliers made in New York by a place that makes them for night clubs." Lit with real candles for years ("my sacristan's stick came in very handy"), Berthelot, tiring of these nightly duties, electrified the chandeliers with dimmers. Silk taffeta sleeves above the chandeliers match the curtains fashioned "Carmencita style." Overhead, the sky and clouds are authentic Berthelot too, bringing the outside in again.

Making do with what you have is a game that Berthelot likes to play. "Look at that Louis-Philippe *secrétaire* between the windows. For years, I considered it an ugly sister. An ugly sister that lived behind a door in another room. But when I started throwing this fabric over the furniture—she came out of hiding and found her place, as ugly sisters do!

In the same way, a Napoleon III desk came into its own as the artist's worktable. Stretching oilcloth over the top and scattering paints and brushes about was an inspired gesture "to take the deadly seriousness out of it!" After all it's the same kind of desk used by the President of France.

Mixing bronze doré and oilcloth is indeed original—and playful in the way only someone secure in the knowledge of his own taste can be. Berthelot readily points out, "there are some good things, some fakes. The fakes are all perfectly recognizable—plaster busts, columns, and consoles (that he has marbleized) from the *Ateliers du Louvre*—but they're nice ones. They're friendly fakes."

Are those blue-and-white soup plates under the amaryllis flowerpots on the Restoration table? "It looks like a mistake, or something you've forgotten about. That's what I like." A deliberately unfinished look is something he has always found enticing. The walls of the first two rooms are sponged yellow and red ocher (over an eggshell base) in a manner that is much less *fin* than the usual application of the method. "But I wanted it done rather crudely. You know that somebody has had their hands on it. People often come here, look at the walls and the light parquet and say, 'but you haven't finished yet!' You see, it's like the Arab thing," he explains, "they never finish a house. Because if you finish a house that means your life is over."



Wherever he's lived or traveled, Berthelot has never come home empty-handed or empty-headed. While others may return with new possessions, part of his new baggage invariably includes an entire philosophy that he will graft onto his very own personal style. "Those are *retour de voyages,*" he says, pointing out the kilim carpets that lead the way to the final *petit salon,* formerly the Duke's bedroom. True to style, Berthelot beckons us further south. We've now gone all the way, lured on by an oversized Turkish divan. By pushing his mania for southern exposure to this extreme, Berthelot comes the full circle and retrieves a very French context: "Because the Turks came frequently to Marseille in the eighteenth century, French country houses in the south of France had these wonderful divans for a lie-down after lunch."

Remaining resolutely French, Gaston Berthelot has opened his windows on the world. Pausing for a moment's thought, he makes an unexpected comparison with houses in Ireland. "You see they are essentially English, Anglo-Saxon—but there is a bit of madness in them. There's a crazy strain that makes them more lively and amusing than the proper stolid English houses, often of the finest quality, but there's a bit of salt and pepper missing!" □ *Editor: Marie-Paule Pellé*

BATIK

(Continued from page 179) on the fabric, outlining with wax instead of ink.

Around 1840 the invention of the *cap* (or *tjap*)—a copper block that applies an entire design onto the cloth with a single imprint—revolutionized the batik industry. With *cap,* a worker can wax twenty pieces a day rather than spending up to 45 days to hand-wax a single piece of cloth.

After each color has been dyed the wax is scraped off and reapplied; sometimes additional designs are



drawn on the cloth between dyeings. After dyeing is completed and the wax is removed, the finished batik is draped over bamboo racks or laid on the ground to dry, then folded and put under a press.

The spectacular works of art created in the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries by this intricate process are a visual archive of the geographic and historic forces that have pressed upon Java for centuries.

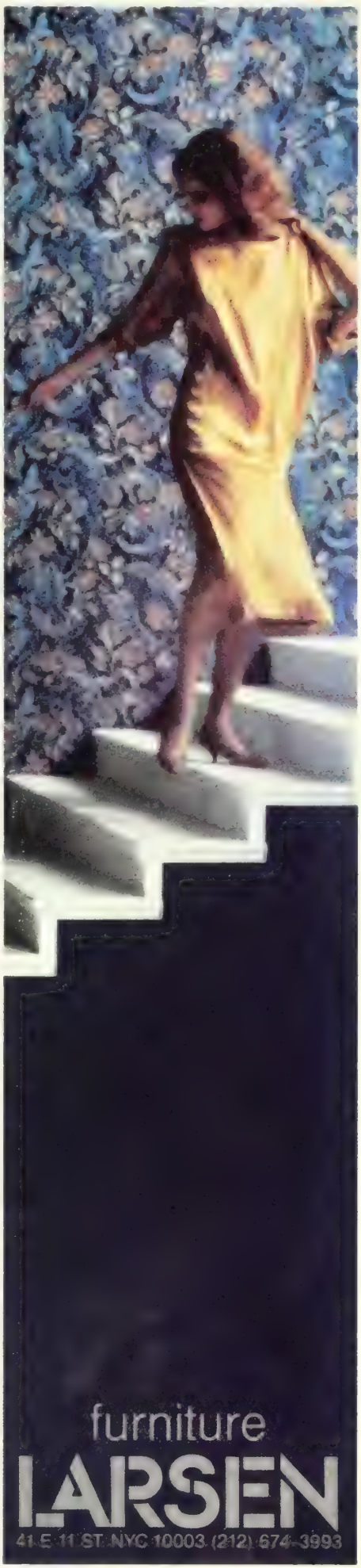
First Buddhism, then Hinduism, then Islam came to Java, and each profoundly affected its sacred and secular life as well as the development of its batik. But typically, the Javanese would adopt particular aspects of each religion that they found appealing and would mingle them with the others. Design elements used in batik are found in both Buddhist and Hindu temples—the lotus, for example, in the reliefs of Borobudur; and the interlocking circular designs in the later Hindu temples of East Java.

Although Muslim communities had existed in Java as early as the twelfth century, it was from Malacca and Sumatra that the major drive for Javanese conversion came. If Javanese merchants were to win Arab favor and support, they would have to open their doors to Islam. The Muslims were the world's leading traders, with connections throughout Asia, Europe, and Africa: association with them meant new routes and more riches.

Islam also worked its way into the designs and uses of batik, "encouraged by the Muslim rulers as a major element of social expression in garments and hangings." Not only did Muslim traders expand the batik market but because of the Muslim prohibition against depicting human forms, design motifs were also changed: flat arabesques and calligraphy were introduced.

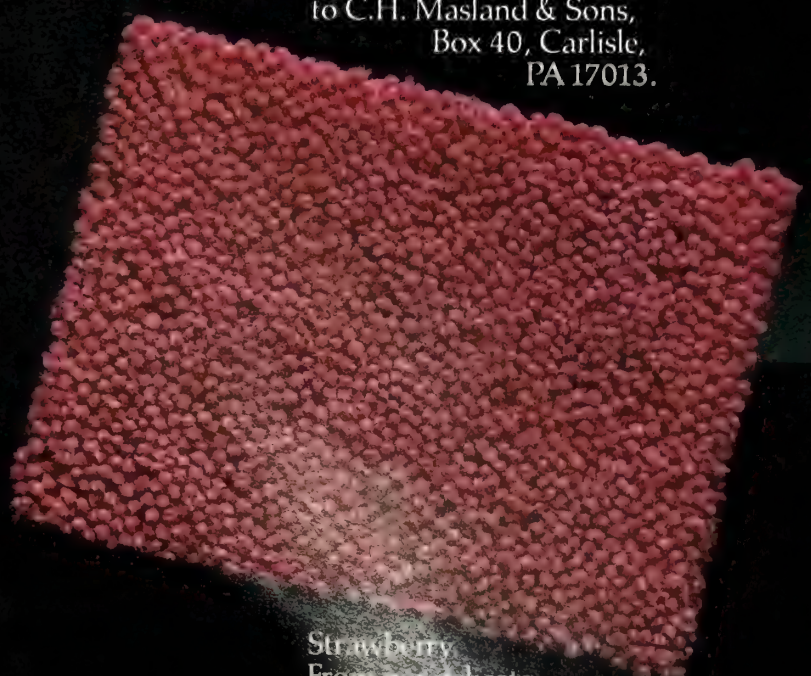
The influence of the Chinese on Javanese batik was as profound. Trading such prestigious commodities as silk and porcelain for Java's textiles the Chinese had long been doing business in the area and the princes of Java had sent colored cotton cloth as tribute to Chinese leaders. Now the Chinese brought mythical lions and lyrical flowers to batik designs along with a bright new palette.

The batik of central Java has always



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had a style of its own: orderly, controlled, usually geometric in somber tones of indigo blue and *soga* brown, often combined with black on a background of cream or white. Java's north-coast batik is surprising and exuberant, vigorous and muted. It explodes with brilliant reds, blues, and radiant yellows blending with soft pastel tints of green, lilac, and pink. The motifs—people, farm produce, fish, and animals—evoke all its varied life, and designs were often made to commemorate special events. War was especially popular, but so was the opening of a new railroad line. Sometimes entire fairy tales were illustrated; sometimes simple playing cards or ships or locomotives.

There was nothing particularly magical about these designs but they tell us what people were thinking at the time and show again the outside influences that came to bear on batik design.

Middlemen, some of mixed descent—Oriental, Arab, European—blazed the trail for the real business of batik in the last half of the nineteenth century. Traders would carry heaps of white cotton and mountains of batik piled high on their bicycles or horse carts. In some coastal towns, the areas known as "Arabic village" or "Chinatown" would turn into veritable mercantile exchanges near sundown.

In contrast to courtly central Java batik in these coastal towns was not so much made for family or personal use; trade was the name of the game. Factories were established by entrepreneurs who catered to local and overseas tastes.

In 1970 there were nearly seven hundred thousand batik workers on the north coast of Java, but within thirteen years their numbers had been reduced to about 250,000. There are many reasons for the decline of batik: the breakdown of a feudal society; the decline of batik as clothing; the policy of transmigration; the competition from Malaysia and Singapore and from "batik" screenprints; the arcane import and export policies; and the fact that Javanese women, as they became better educated, began to seek other careers.

Modern batik designers are aware that theirs is an art whose heyday is past. They search for new inspirations in their roots and in new techniques. By the 21st century, *cap* batik will probably give way almost entirely to screenprinting; *tulis* will continue in limited quantity for a rich clientele. Rather than representing aspects of Javanese life, culture, and religion, batik will be more and more the inspiration of particular designers. No doubt their best work will be seen as art, used for wall hangings or perhaps even for ceremonial and religious occasions. Ironically, this was the original use of the cloth. After more than two hundred years, batik will have come full circle. □

The exhibition "Fabled Cloth: Batik from Java's North Coast" is on view at the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., until January 6, 1985. On January 29 it opens at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York. Subsequently it will travel to The Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto and the Sewall Art Gallery at Rice University in Houston.
Photographs pages 178–180 by Brian Brake.

CACTUS IN SPLENDOR

(Continued from page 165) colored pale green with rosy tips. What passes for trees formed of cacti are in fact giant *Euphorbia ingens,* not cacti at all, and a big *Cereus horribarbis,* sort of an elephant from the shoulder down. These impressions were not hard to come by; the Huntington Desert Garden virtually forces you to stretch your concept of "plant."

Railroad magnate Henry E. Huntington's concept of "garden" had to be stretched in 1905, when his ranch foreman and landscape designer, William Hertrich, first approached him about adding a desert collection to the master plan for the most extraordinary gardens in the area. Agreeing to the garden on a trial basis, Mr. Huntington, who had just retired to his ranch to pursue his interests in collecting art and rare books, was won over by Hertrich's successful design of about three acres planted with cacti and other succulents from local nurseries and estates. Soon afterward, with Huntington's hearty approval (by now he was already thinking of the property's future public value) William Hertrich began what was to be over twenty years of enrichments to the desert garden, ensuring its future as one of the most aesthetically pleasing botanical gardens to be found.



Winter-blooming lampranthus

Early on, Hertrich contacted European nurseries for plants and seeds for the fledgling California garden; other cacti and succulent fanciers around the country and the world heard about Huntington's garden and donated plants. As the acreage of the garden was expanded, specimens from plant expeditions to desert areas populated the new territory. A 1908 trip to Arizona brought back three railroad cars full of cacti, on a spur line of Mr. Huntington's Pacific Electric Railway. In the teens, an expedition to Mexico produced several thousand new specimens of cacti. By the thirties, the Desert Garden had come into its own.

Hertrich's gardening heirs attended no less lovingly than he to the Desert Garden, and over the following years saw it through the failure of prized-plant experiments (the saddest of which was the unsuccessful transplanting of a peerless crested saguaro from Arizona), forced wartime neglect, and several decimating frosts. The current



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staff minutely documents each new plant upon arrival, but the garden was growing for 25 years before anyone began to record its contents; today the Desert Garden is beautiful in part because of plants up to ninety years old whose origins remain a mystery.

In such an extraordinary environment problems thrive alongside the plants, and the Huntington staff manages them patiently and good-naturedly. Though the visitor is enchanted by the garden's jungle quality, Jim Dice, as curator, has legitimate worries about overcrowding, which can not only kill rare plants but also obscure labels beneath tenacious foliage, forcing a gardener to remove a plant entirely in order to recover its identity. Weeding is a continuous difficulty; for negotiating especially cactus-rich areas head gardener Joe Clements has had to invent his own tools, several of them made from barbecue utensils. The two other full-time gardeners spend so much time maintaining the present plantings that new beds are cleared behind schedule. Nonetheless, each new bed, in accordance with the latest master plan, is geographically better organized than the older beds, and its appearance is more like natural habitat. Also part of the master plan is the nearly completed conservatory in the upper garden, for displaying all the rare plants that now reside in the greenhouse (under the care of horticulturist John Trager) out of public view. The Huntington attempts to introduce new, rare, or unusual succulents to the Southwest nursery trade on a continuing basis; and the general public is offered regularly scheduled educational programs.

The Huntington is, after all, an educational institution; the Desert Garden boasts specimens either a scholar or tourist feels gratified to have the opportunity to study. But to my mind, the education of the senses is an equally important function of the garden. When you visit this lush desert you share it with lizards, parrots, hummingbirds, and a tame blue jay; their movements will heighten the feeling that you are entering another dimension where a cactus might be expected to do something more aggressive than grow. But what is wonderful here is that only your imagination, not the plants, can carry you away. □

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LESSONS OF A LIFETIME

(Continued from page 153) the most talked-about houses are based on nineteenth-century themes pioneered by Mongiardino or Geoffrey Bennison. Fernanda's house is one of these recent efforts. Decorator Anne Geddes helped her with the main sitting room, but for the rest Fernanda took her time and pieced together a rather Victorian mixture of fringed benches covered with nineteenth-century needlework, round tables covered with stacks of books and magazines, flower prints framed in England with marbleized mats and black frames, black lacquer and black papier-mâché furniture, Empire daybeds, glazed chintzes, discreet stripes, walls painted the pale vivid pastels of a twentieth-century English dandy's shirts, real sisal and wool-sisal rugs, revitalized Victorian and Edwardian tufted upholstered furniture. The effect is both fresh and old-fashioned.

In the course of doing her own decorating Fernanda developed interests that in turn developed into business ideas. After Christmas she will introduce with her partner Liz Williams a line of chintz designs taken from eighteenth-century documents. Also a director of the Clarendon Gallery in London, which specializes in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century watercolors and engravings, Fernanda helps plan Clarendon's exhibitions in New York.

Fernanda's luxuries on Long Island go beyond the obvious ones of owning an agreeable old house, garden, and orchard. Past being house-proud she possesses sufficient serenity and humor to move forty little children indoors but not into the basement when a thunderstorm washes out an afternoon party in the garden. She urges grown-up guests to wear bathing suits to lunches around the pool where tables are covered in the best beautifully ironed linen cloths and napkins and the menu is light but complete.

By the end of October most house guests have gone and it is too chilly to sit on the terrace past five o'clock. It's the time of the year when the whole family spends Saturday afternoon painting pictures together. Her brush in the paint pot, Fernanda's mind nevertheless races ahead—bulbs to be planted, plans laid for the Parrish Art Museum benefit, ideas on how to back the latest needlework acquisitions when they get made into cushions, who to call to say that Gavin Henderson of Clarendon will be here in a few weeks. All happy thoughts, that start at home are rooted in the look of the house, and make a life move along just right. □

Editor: Jacqueline Gonne

THE HOUSE WITHIN

(Continued from page 134) with the pervasive straight lines and right angles of the new construction.

Visually, the old house is a powerful presence, its outer walls and double-hung windows painted a strong clear red. Seen from new rooms and patio as a cherished relic or personal museum installation, this preserved cottage gives depth and resonance to everything new.

George Woo based the new structure on a nine-foot-square grid that organizes the ground-level tile floors indoors and outdoors as well as the posts and beams that rise as high as three stories and push through the glass walls to the patio. Courtyard windows on the long wing fit the grid in sizes that diminish as they rise.

Color is used not only for pleasure but also as another organizing factor. The Woos worked on color choices with Stephanie Mallis from the Pei office, all three actually matching paint chips to flower petals. The red of the Dallas azalea—the color that means happiness in China, the Woos' ancestral homeland—defines the social zone. Two tranquil colors appear: Texas-bluebonnet blue for the master suite and spruce green, the hue of the ink used in old Chinese landscapes, for the family and music rooms. Sun yellow belongs to some of the space for George Woo's recently formed architecture firm; ceilings directly under the roof are sky blue.

And the client is pleased. □

Editor: Heather Smith MacIsaac

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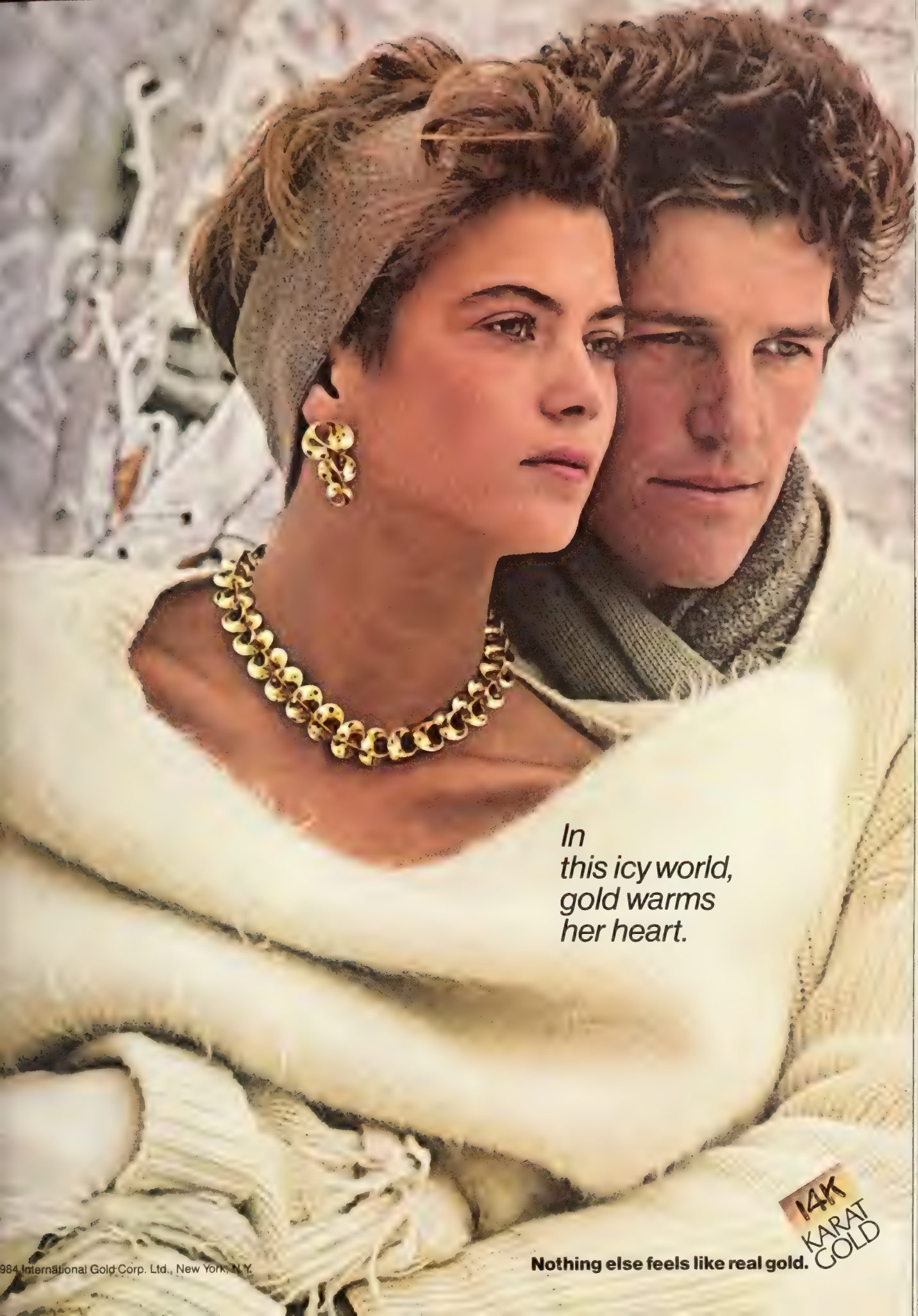
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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

On Christmas Eve you will always find our family among the throngs at The Riverside Church in New York City for the traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols there. Its chancel filled with clusters of tall bare evergreens and banks of bright red poinsettias, its long aisles lit by candles, friends of long standing among the many gathered in its immense nave, it is part of our celebration of the mystery and magic of Christmas.

Mystery and magic permeate the pages of this December issue, and helping us with our Christmas tidings are the angels that adorn The Metropolitan Museum of Art's tall blue spruce every year. Those angels have now been lovingly recorded in a new book, *The Angel Tree,* with photographs by Elliott Erwitt and text by Linn Howard, who supervises the assembly of the intricate display that amazes and delights thousands of visitors to the Met each Christmas season, and Mary Jane Pool, a former editor-in-chief of House & Garden. Our excerpt from it begins on page 84, while figures from another Neapolitan crèche add to the magic here and on page 98.



A Neapolitan angel from the collection of La Fundación Bartolomé March Servera in Palma de Mallorca, photographed by Jacques Dirand.

Two earthbound angels are Helen Hayes and Sir John Gielgud, whose stage presences have enriched the lives of countless theatergoers over the years. We think you'll find as much magic offstage as on when you see our photographs of Pretty Penny, the house on the Hudson that has been home to the first lady of the American stage for more than fifty years, page 160; and then visit with us the country estate of Sir John Gielgud, page 178. Molly Keane's piece on Sir John set me to reading her novel *Good Behaviour* once again.

That all the world's a stage is more than amply illustrated by two special stories in this issue: one is John Richardson's piece on The Mongiardino Style, page 104, with photographs of the distinguished designer's Milan apartment by Oberto Gili; and Martin Filler's story, Quinn Essential, page 152, on collectors Joan and Jack Quinn, with photographs by Henry Bowles and portraits by Helmut Newton and Antonio.

Richard Meier was this year's winner of the prestigious Pritzker Prize for Architecture. House & Garden over the years has published work by all of the winners in the six years of its existence—Philip Johnson, Luis Barragán, James Stirling, Kevin Roche, I. M. Pei, and Meier—and we are pleased to include these photographs by Ezra Stoller of Meier's most recent house, page 142. A handsome design, it demonstrates once again why this architect remains at the top of his profession.

Originated during Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's state visit here in 1982, The Festival of India 1985–86 will celebrate Indian culture in the United States. The festival's principal organizer is Pupul Jayakar, whose restored Lutyens bungalow, page 170, provides a preview of the kind of choice Indian art and artifacts we will be seeing in the months to come. Adding to the interest in things Indian will be the forthcoming television series *The Jewel in the Crown* in mid December on *Masterpiece Theatre* and *A Passage to India,* the David Lean–directed film based on E. M. Forster's classic novel by the same name, which will be released in mid December.

And so angels and their miracles, earthlings and their fantasies abound in the pages of this issue, put together in the hope that from a variety of rich traditions you will find a measure of the awe of this particular season. Last year a magical gift for me was a poem written by Helen V. Boucek, the mother of a friend. Tucked inside her Christmas card, entitled *The Tree,* it read:

'Gray is all theory
Green and Gold
The flaming Tree of Life . . .'

Before it settles to its winter sleeping
Blazes to our sight
Proclaiming deathlessness
In transformations too marvelous
to imagine:

Grubs to butterflies
Snakes to angels
Men to gods
And God to Man again.

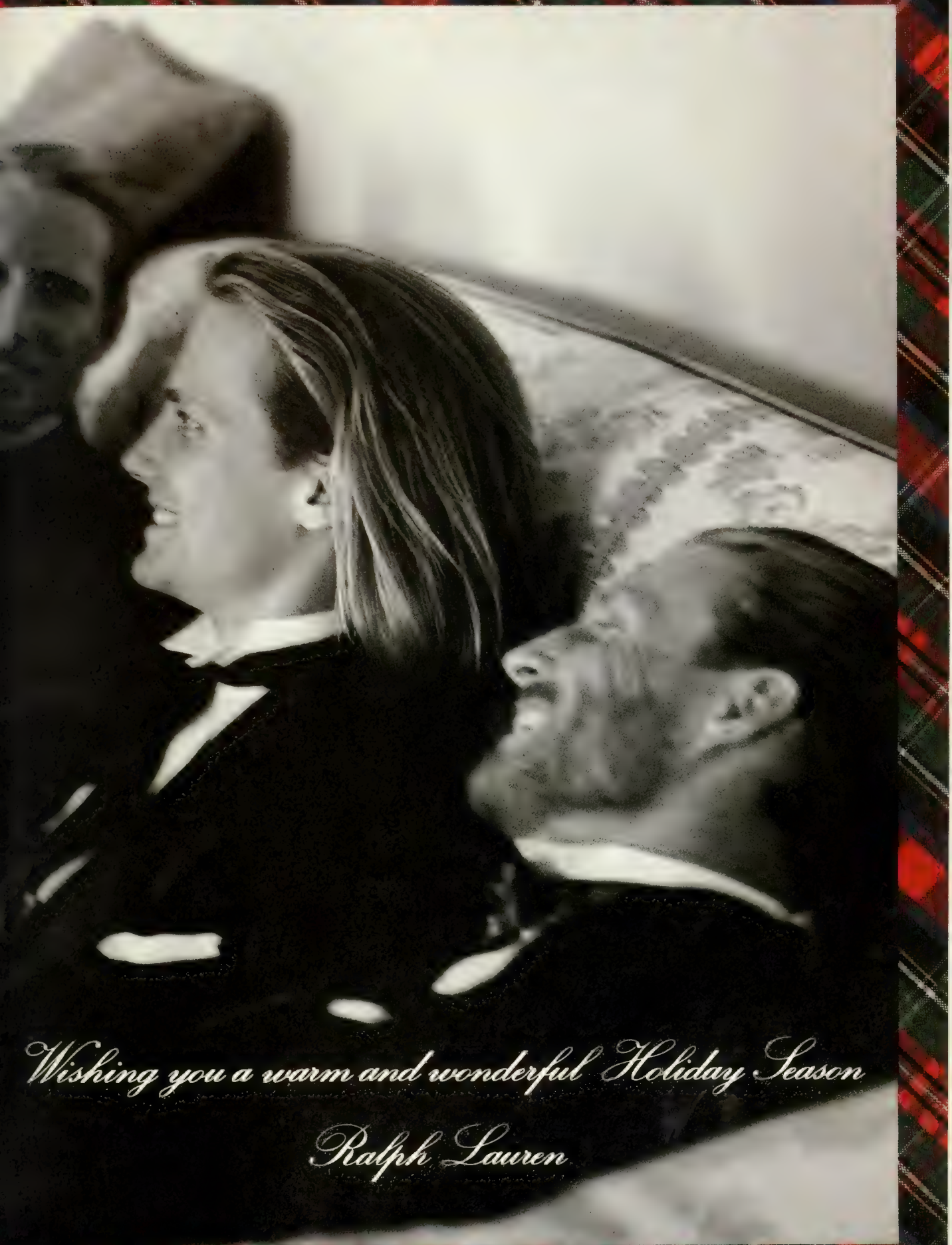
This miracle happens in the dead of winter.

Lou Gropp

Editor-in-Chief


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ALL ABOUT STYLE

By Nancy Richardson



Faux candelabrum

■ CANDELABRA MANIA On a Proust-inspired dinner table in New York last spring: a forest of late-nineteenth-century eight-light gilded candelabra made a dazzling structural framework for big bouquets of old-fashioned flowers. In September at Vaux-le-Vicomte, the French palace that is the direct design antecedent for Versailles, the mood came straight from Le Nôtre: another long party table, this time with four baroque candelabra in silver and a dense underplanting of miniature faux orange trees in silver pots. Moral: Rent candelabra if you don't own a whole forest or try a fantasy in a candelabra shape like Ronaldo Maia's fantasy in moss, birch twigs, and orchids, *right*. ■ WHAT'S IN A FRAME Recently museum curators, decorators, and dealers have been making the point that the frame is an important part of the message in any work of art. And sometimes, a frame is the point altogether. In the Lehman Wing at the Metropolitan Museum, empty or damask-lined Renaissance frames hang on the wall to be admired for themselves. In the André Meyer Galleries, the elaborate gold frames of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century pictures are thought of as blinders that intensify the viewer's response to the picture. Nevertheless, few recent paintings by serious artists get more than minimal framing. So much more outstanding, then, are the handsome gold moldings that complete Francis Bacon's *Triptych '83*. Together with the vivid and lyrical pomegranate red, against which his typically demanding imagery floats, the framing gives this work startling elegance as—heretical thought—decoration. At Marlborough Gallery, London.



Francis Bacon's *Triptych '83*



Rare ivory cabinet at the Victoria & Albert



■ BOULLE IN REVERSE Especially in the seventeenth century, the most advanced decoration was carried out in small rich rooms that were meant to provide a more intimate setting than the huge reception rooms they opened into. In a tiny white

PHOTOGRAPH OF CANDELABRA BY PETER MAUSS/ESTO. THE TRYPTICH, COURTESY MARLBOROUGH GALLERY, LONDON; CABINET, VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON



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Italian set designs





room in the Paris apartment of Louis XIV's brother the duc d'Orléans, the walls were covered with white watered-silk hangings bordered in gold and silver. There were ten green-stained chairs upholstered in green brocade with gold flowers, as well as ebony-and-silver cabinets. The most beautiful thing in the room, however, was a small ivory cabinet enriched with a floral marquetry made by the king's cabinetmaker, Pierre Golle, the predecessor of André-Charles Boulle. The cabinet has just been bought by the Victoria & Albert Museum in London where it is already on display. The V & A's deputy keeper of furniture, Simon Jervis, delights in this delicate evidence that in the age of Louis XIV not all taste was dour and magnificent. ■ STYLISH EXHIBITIONS Architectural drawings, watercolors of interiors, designs for furniture, schemes for ceilings and carpets have fascinated the art market for the last five years. Now dealers are seeking out new categories. This year Gavin Henderson of the Clarendon Gallery, London, is exhibiting eighteenth-century inn signs at the Thomas Galdy Gallery, New York, until December 1. Wheelock Whitney is offering a group of nineteenth-century Italian set designs from the period when the Italians influenced all Europe in such matters. These appealing works by professional set designers for specific productions are skilled but not pedantic, take your breath away for a moment and demand no more. The ones I like best are those where the artist's imagination completely outweighs his education and travels. The exhibition consists of sixty examples ranging from the high classical tradition to a picturesque style favored at a more romantic moment a hundred years later. Each frame is painted to resemble a different stone like marble, porphyry, or granite. 123 East 62nd St., NYC, until Dec. 15. ■ WRIGHT RECOGNIZED In 1972 the Metropolitan Museum bought an entire house in Wayzata, Minnesota, on the eve of its scheduled demolition. Built in 1912–14 by Frank Lloyd Wright for his friends and patrons the Francis W. Littles, it is one of the largest of Wright's Prairie houses. The museum installed the main living room of the house in its American Wing in the spring of 1983 thereby becoming the first major museum to install a twentieth-century period room. Now the Met has consigned a six-panel bay window ($60,000–$80,000) and two skylight panels ($4,000–$6,000) from the Little house to a sale of American Decorative Arts at Christie's, Friday, Dec. 14. If the windows make their estimate, they will equal prices paid for seminal eighteenth-century architectural elements and mark the market's recognition of Wright as America's leading architect. ■ PLUSH PUPPIES UNDER GLASS As it gets harder to



High-style design for sale

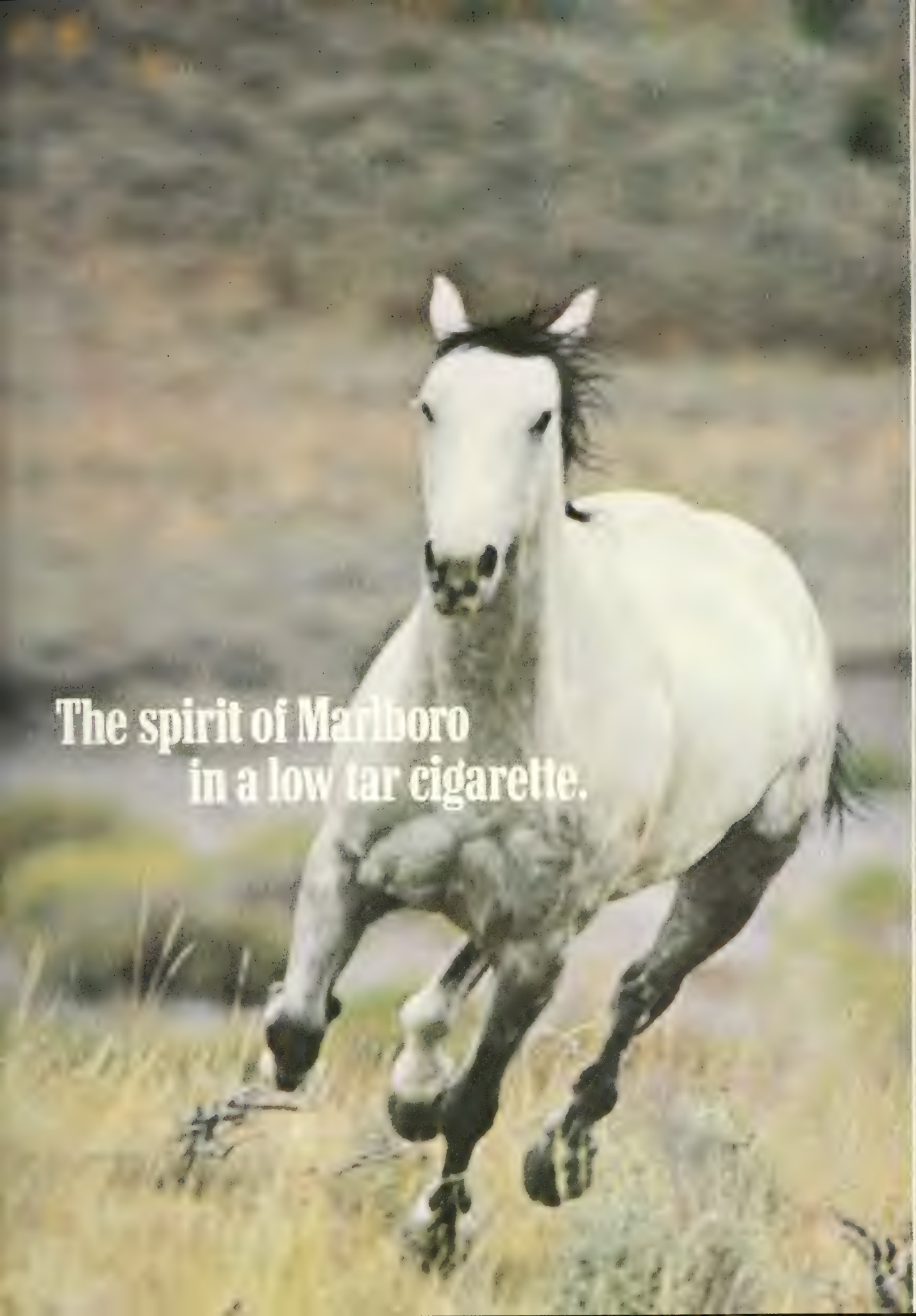


Needlework gone fuzzy-wuzzy





PHOTOGRAPHS OF SET DESIGNS BY [illegible]; NEEDLEWORK PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER MAUSS/ESTO HIGH-STYLE DESIGNS, COURTESY CHRISTIE'S


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find animal paintings at nursery picture prices, alert collectors hav turned to nineteenth-century framed amateur needlework of children and animals. The two on page 16 are a combination of a flat gros point and Berlin work which stands out in relief and gives animals a stuffed toy look. A Trevor Potts.

■ GET IT You couldn't possibly imitate the successes of Mario Praz's survey of the history of decoration or his sensibility, but with some very special credentials you might, oddly enough, make some improvements. And so enter a book a professional lifetime in the making and several years in the works—done in his spare time—by the Keeper of Furniture and Woodwork at the Victoria & Albert Museum. *Authentic Decor* (Viking) by Peter Thornton (just appointed Keeper of the Soane Museum in London) is a hundred-dollar, four-hundred-page survey of the four hundred years that make up the modern period. It is dense, literate, not without humor, and has the advantage and goal of being comprehensive but never exhausting. The book is divided into fifty-year segments, each one divided into four sections: an overview of the era—its mood, the major houses, clients, professionals, characteristics—e.g., an emphasis on ceilings or upholstery; the planning and arrangement of rooms; the architectural shell; loose furnishings.

At the end of each section comes a bank of as many as fifty illustrations, many from the V & A's outstanding archive. They are for the most part presented in color—conversation pieces, genre paintings, designs for chimney pieces, watercolors of artists' rooms, proposals for ceilings and walls done by everybody from Adam to Zuber, plates from fashion journals and a bathroom painted on a fan.

Many writers on decoration and design reveal their likes and dislikes by the emphasis they give certain periods. To his credit, it's hard to tell where Peter Thornton's taste lies. He is neither obviously Anglophile or Francophile about the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, when the leadership in fashionable taste was passing back and forth from France to England. He also discusses what went on in Holland, Germany, America, and the Scandinavian countries, commenting at one



80 PROOF LIQUEUR. IMPORTED BY © W.A. TAYLOR & CO., MIAMI, FLORIDA 1984

oint that the Dutch version of French ıste was often more to the rest of Eu- ɔpe's liking than the French original. ı charting the local variants Thornton rgues the view that fashions in interior ecoration from the beginning have een international phenomena cutting cross all borders. It is basic to first plot the international development" efore turning to regional styles.

Following Thornton's linear treat- ıent of the evolution of taste and be- ıg satisfied with his ample explana- ons, I still longed for more, for topics ıat didn't fit the organization of the ook. Thornton glances off a tantaliz- ıg subject when he allows, in an aside, ıat the Chinese drawing room at Carl- ɔn House and much of the Brighton avilion marked the last flowering of hinese taste in Europe until 1930. Oh ɔ have a chart of the development of ıat taste—a chapter's worth—or a hapter on the recurring interest in Gothic architecture and motifs, or the Greco/Roman-Renaissance-Pom- eian/Etruscan-Neoclassical progres- on for that matter. But if certain ıemes don't fit the book's develop- ıent and the introduction leaves one anging in its thesis that it is the density f material that differentiates the look f interiors from one period to the next, ıe top man at the top museum rewards atient reading with bits of hilarity:

"In Paris (late eighteenth century) eople of a particularly amorous dis- osition sometimes had a plate of mir- ɔr-glass set into the domes of their eds but this practice was less eagerly dopted after Calonne, the Minister of inance, was nearly cut in half when ıe glass fell out of the tester of his bed. he precise circumstances do not seem ɔ be recorded . . ." And if as you laugh ou wonder if it's not possible to get ıe gist of decoration in the last four undred years in a simpler way, I have recommendation. It is the work of an- ther Englishman. Osbert Lancaster rote and illustrated *Homes Sweet Iomes* (John Murray, London) in 939. He uses not a single date, tarts—one page and one satirical rawing to a period—with Norman, nd ends up subdividing the twentieth entury into categories such as: Ordi- ary Cottage, Cultured Cottage, tockbrokers Tudor, Functional, Even Iore Functional. Seventy-nine pages nd as many laughs. □





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HEALTHY DECADENCE

Barry Friedman has a fine eye for the best of the bizarre

By Michael Boodro

Behind an imposing façade on 82nd Street, half a block from the Metropolitan Museum, beyond a heavy mahogany door and up a shadowy, darkened stair several black doors confront the visitor, none clearly identified as the entrance. Once inside, all is hushed under high white ceilings. Draped French windows shield against the light and elaborate plaster moldings weave around wall panels containing small canvases, pastels, and watercolors. On ornate tables rest large bronze figures and carved stone bas reliefs. The gallery assistant is elegantly dressed and accommodating with a slight, untraceable accent.

It's an atmosphere appropriate to the artworks and exhibitions that have earned Barry Friedman Ltd. its reputation during the past five years. The gallery specializes in the refined, mysterious, slightly decadent, and even morbid art of *fin-de-siècle* artists, the Pre-Raphaelites and the Symbolists and their far-flung contemporaries such as Hodler and Knopff, as well as the sinuous, convoluted, and often dark decorative arts of the same period.

In fact, the only incongruous element in this rarefied retreat is the owner himself, Barry Friedman, who bursts forth from a back office, wearing a faded olive mechanic's jump suit, grinning widely, his hair and beard neatly trimmed. He seems almost to relish the fact that his presence is so unexpected, almost disconcerting, as he launches into the story of how such a young man has become a fixture in a rather small, rather precious field of the art market and how and why he is expanding beyond the area that has made his reputation. In October, for example, he opened an exhibition of fifty years of chair design. Breaking into new territory is, it turns out, a pattern Friedman has been following since his college days.





Above: Barry Friedman in Breuer's Wassily chair, 1928. In front of Rossetti's portrait of Alexa Wilding, and Franz von Stuck's of Tilla Durieux, *below, left to right,* chairs by Bugatti, Hoffmann, c. 1906, Mackintosh, 1904, Wagner, 1902.

He grew up in Manhattan where, he says, "My mother was a dealer, basically in general antiques. She did a lot in souvenir spoons. But I *hated* antiques stores. Whenever we'd go to one, either upstate or in New Jersey, I started screaming. I wouldn't go in. I'd wait in the car. But then I was something of a juvenile delinquent. I was even in a street gang," he states proudly, knowing full well how absurd it sounds now as he sits in an elegant twenties chair. "I was quite a hippie in college. I went to Pace. I started the S.D.S. chapter on campus while I avoided the draft. I was in college a long time. I stayed there to get a deferment. I took twelve credits, the minimum you could get away with. I had hair down to my waist and a beard almost as long. But I was always a middle-class kid, so I kept it neat. I wore it in a ponytail."

And it was while in college that Friedman took the step that would lead to his present career. "I bought something," as he succinctly puts it. "It was an iridescent glass vase in the style of Loetz and cost $8. I loved it." While attending college Friedman also managed to



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work full-time as a rather bohemi
C.P.A. for a Greenwich Village bo
tique/restaurant. "They called me J.
for Jesus Christ, because of my hair a
beard." Friedman feels this early bu
ness training was a great help in
own career, but more importantly
gave him enough disposable income
buy a bit more period glass. "I reme
ber distinctly once," he recalls,
found four vases by Loetz himself
could have all four for $80. But I did
have the money. I had to pay it ov
time. I also sold one or two vases I h
bought before. I remember on one
made a profit of about $5." That, to
was a harbinger of the future.

"You have to understand," he co
tinues, "these vases were a very big p
of my life. I played with them eve
night. I handled them a lot. On wee
ends I would go up to Massachuset
looking for more things. Then I start
working as a runner, buying and selli
to other dealers. I got into that initia
by putting an ad in the *Times*.

"I only did it to finance my colle
tion," he says. "I remember very w
when I bought my first piece of Tif
ny, from Helen Eisenberg. It cost $8
Of course, I only had $20." Friedm
remains impressed by the generos
and helpfulness of the dealers he w
involved with at the time. "I rememb
once I found a piece of Loetz for abo
a hundred some-odd dollars. This w
in October and I really couldn't affo
it until the following April, when I g
my tax return. I gave them a $20 depo
it, but they let me take the piece. I w
shocked. They didn't even know me.

In 1968, he decided to chuck his jo
"I started business as a dealer, runni
back and forth. If I wrote out a che
for a hundred dollars to buy somethi
I had to immediately run out and s
something to cover the check. Th
went on for about a year." At this tim
Friedman quite shrewdly began e
panding into small Art Deco objec
and jewelry, several years before t
market took off.

In 1969 he opened his first shop,
booth in an antiques center. It co
$275 a month, with electricity. I didn
know where I'd get the money. Fort
nately, Art Deco started catching on
In May 1970 he opened Primave
Gallery on Madison Avenue and 68
Street, with his then wife Audr
Friedman, specializing in Deco, tur

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of-the-century decorative arts, and some Victoriana. "I left in 1973, and again started dealing privately, miscellaneous stuff, Nouveau, Deco, and some Symbolist work."

Friedman's interest in Symbolism had begun when he saw Charles Allan Winter's *Fantaisie Égyptienne* in Boston. This large, ornate painting of a nearly naked Cleopatra figure perched on platform shoes and holding a large boa constrictor would later serve as a kickoff for a major survey of American Symbolists at NYU's Grey Art Gallery in the fall of 1979. It was the first painting Friedman ever acquired. "When I got it home, it was so big I said to myself, 'God, what did I do?'" What he did was launch into an extensive study of the Symbolists and Pre-Raphaelites, the start of a long and fruitful association. "In 1974, I bought my first Dante Gabriel Rossetti pastel. I still have it."

In the fall of the same year, he also began dealing in antique posters, again shortly before this market took off. "The problem was that none of the European and uptown dealers would come downtown," says Friedman of this short-term stay in his West Village quarters. So the following year he moved to an apartment at 82nd and Madison, in the same space his gallery now occupies.

This rather picaresque tale is indicative of why Friedman is regarded as somewhat of a maverick among the trade. He seems to emphasize unwritten rules of the art trade by breaking, superseding, or simply remaining oblivious to them. Friedman didn't apprentice with a master, didn't spend years working for a museum or a gallery, nor did he pursue formal study. Perhaps most damning, he refuses to specialize. Friedman acknowledges almost gleefully his out-of-the-ordinary status. "I took my first and only art course my last term in college. But I loved it. So what did I do all those years? I read a lot. I have a library you wouldn't believe, books and books and more books. And a ton of magazines. I read everything." He proudly points out some overloaded shelves adjacent to his office. "And this isn't the half of it. I have a file on every object. I love doing research," he states proudly.

It is the wide range of styles, periods, and objects that fascinate him which have made Friedman so unique, not to mention so successful. He is unable to articulate what instincts have led him to an interest—and an investment—in areas that within a few years would capture the imaginations of a much larger public, gaining him not only numerous clients but large profits. He has seen Art Nouveau, Art Deco, period posters, and now Symbolist works achieve much wider popularity and higher prices. "I just feel it," he says of his prescient choices. "I love it."

Nor is this a process which shows any sign of abating. Now that the market for fifties furniture and decorative objects is attaining new popularity, it turns out that Friedman has been collecting it for years. "I've always loved the fifties. I've always lived in two worlds, the turn of the century and the fifties. I love fifties cars and music as



Tamara de Lempicka's *La Bohémienne* behind Carlo Mollino's 1949–50 chair.

well. I used to have the most beautiful '57 Studebaker. Even back in 1973 my East Village apartment was done entirely in crazy fifties furniture and objects." Now Friedman has a large country house overlooking the Hudson that is a repository of his favorite pieces from the period. "I feel not the least bit of favoritism," he says of his seemingly scattershot interests and tastes.

Indeed, he is happy to show off his back storage room, formerly his dining room, now stuffed with an incredible assortment of both precious and slightly absurd objects, including an Elsie de



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Wolfe Lucite-and-leopard-skin chair, a Magistretti chair, and Bugatti's original dining-room set, which rests upon a Léger carpet. An original Mackintosh chair jostles a George Nelson desk. A Joe Colombo chair of 1963 stands near an Ico and Luisa Parisi sideboard from the fifties, over which hangs a Ferdinand Hodler painting. All share space with a large thirties futuristic robot and an original Wurlitzer jukebox. "I enjoy good kitsch," Friedman says simply.

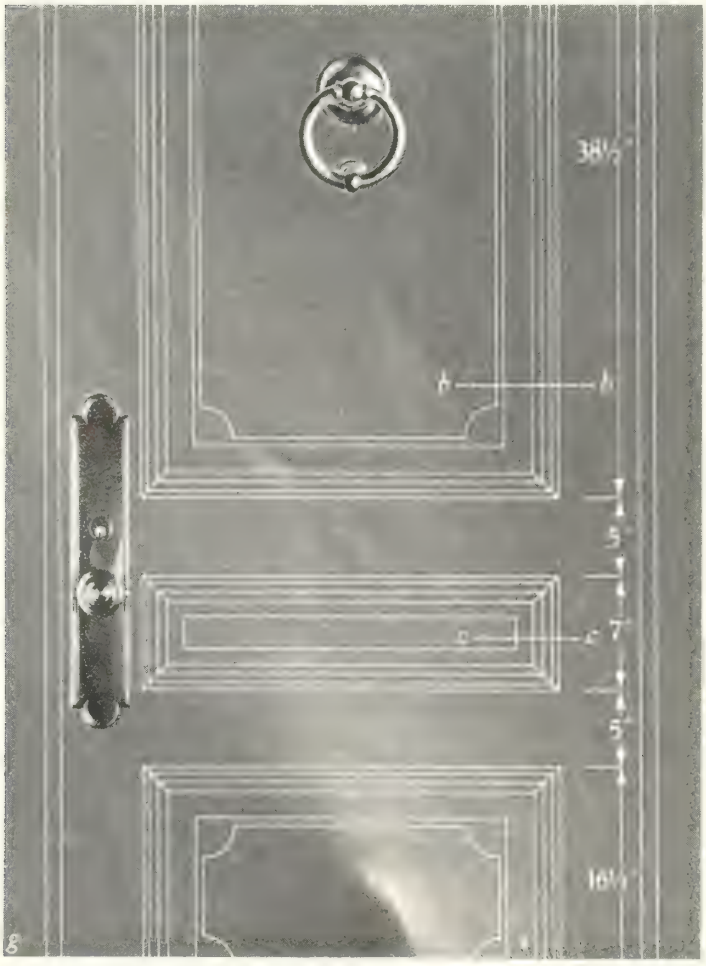
The exhibition of chair designs from 1900 to 1950 that opened in October (with accompanying scholarly catalogue) seems another departure for the gallery, except that Friedman personally has a collection of more than four hundred chairs. "I have two storerooms full," he says matter-of-factly. "You open a door and chairs fall out. I'm planning to open an annex nearby to sell good fifties pieces and Bauhaus originals by appointment. I also have an enormous fifties glass collection. Eventually, as with everything else, I may have to start selling some of those pieces as well."

Chairs hold a particular appeal, Friedman believes, "because they sum up the design of a period. It's like one word, one object, that says it all. Chairs are a good size." The exhibition will consist of fifty or sixty examples, including originals by Guimard, Van de Velde, Mackintosh, Breuer, Chareau, Hoffmann, and Aalto, as well as several lesser-known but fascinating designers. Never one to do something by half-measures, Friedman is planning a complete revamping of the gallery space to accommodate the complex installation. "You won't recognize the place," he says.

As he prepares to change into a suit for lunch with a German client in a neighborhood restaurant, Friedman pauses to contemplate his own energy and the unorthodox methods that have kept him ahead of several markets and have upset more than a few old-school professionals.

"I've always made a good collection," he says, smiling. "First it was four-leaf clovers when I was a kid, then baseball cards, and stamps and Indian-head pennies. And I did it on a quarter-a-week allowance. I collected records from the fifties and old jazz. I still have my Beatles lunch box. I collected fifties clothes when I went through my brief punk stage. I took after my mother. But as my collections change, I change, too. I was into neon clocks. I just sold my big collection of plastic radios. I collected Lempicka years ago, and Cassandre posters."

At the moment he is considering tackling contemporary art as well, with an exhibition contemplated for next spring. He is expanding his involvement in Bauhaus design. "Just say I'm interested in good design of the twentieth century." While not strictly accurate, anything else might prove too limiting to apply to the ever-changing Barry Friedman. □



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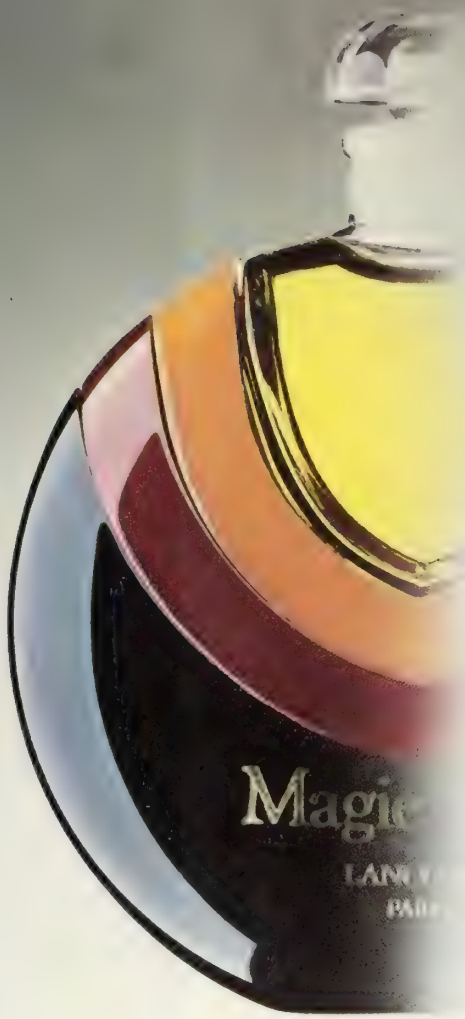
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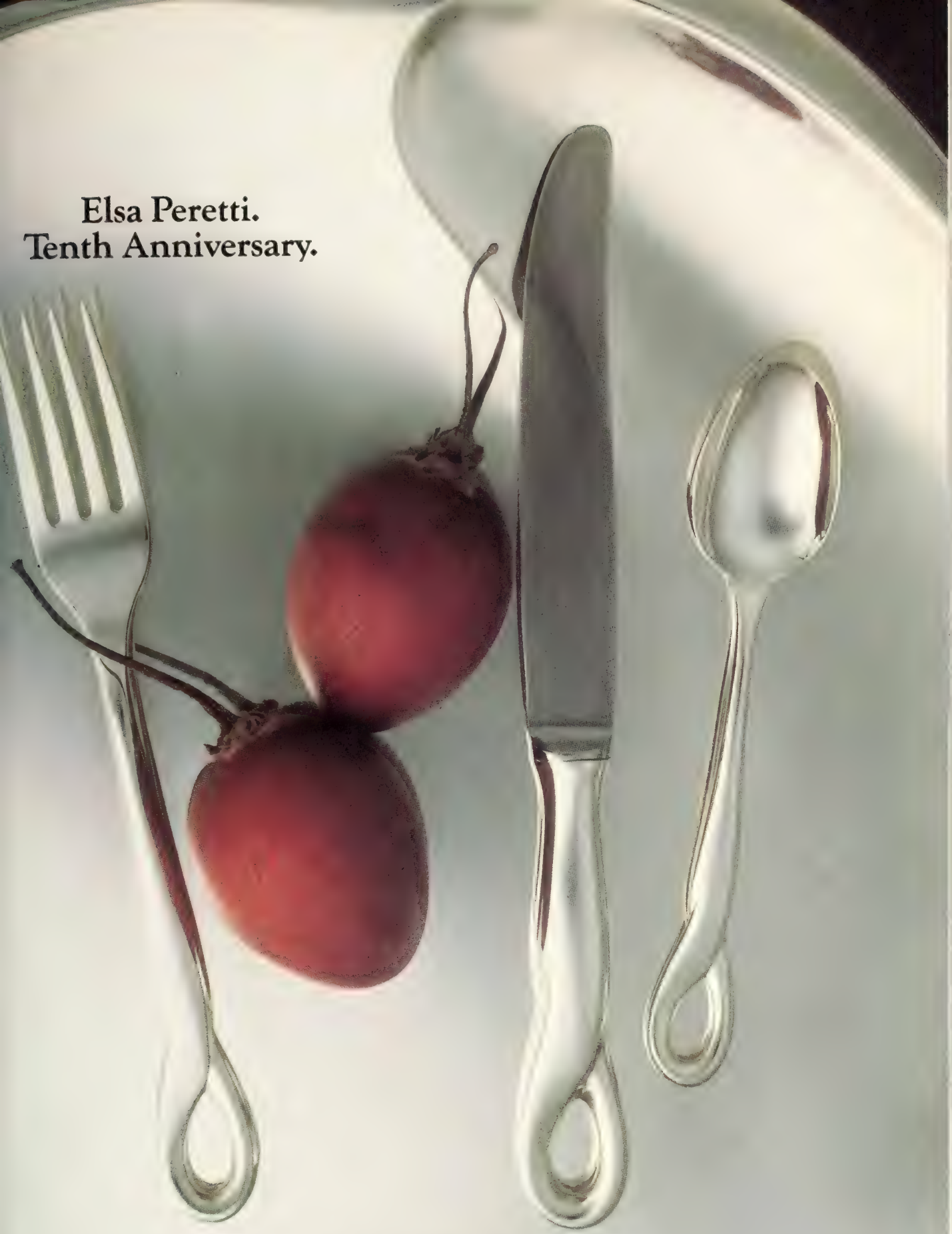
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A VINTAGE SPAT

Breaking the gender barrier in the macho world of wine-tasting

By M. F. K. Fisher

Although I have known very few men of letters intimately, excluding my husbands, of course, Angelo Pellegrini is the only one I have ever shared a spit-bucket with.

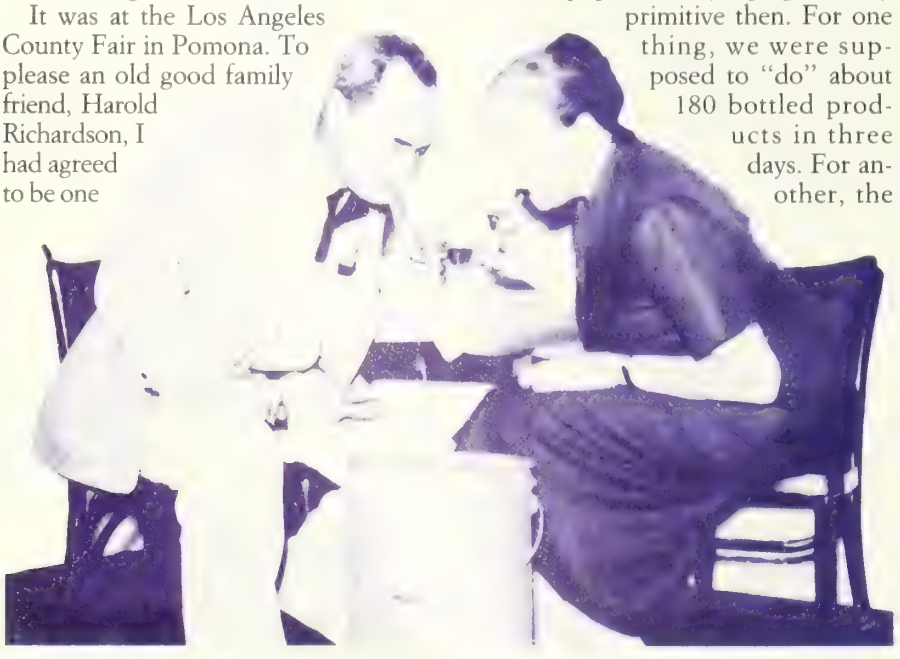
Perhaps the nearest I ever came to this was one noontime in a heat-spell in New York, in about 1944, when I waited a long time for Somerset Maugham to get up from his luncheon rendezvous with a handsome blonde and then sat as soon as possible on his chair. It was warmer than the weather, almost hot from his plump old bottom, and I felt it voluptuously through my whole being, like fine tea or perhaps a noble Chambertin sat upon and in, rather than drunk as common mortals would absorb it.

And sharing a bucket at the Pomona County Fairgrounds with Angelo Pellegrini, in about 1946, was even headier . . . or perhaps I should say soul-shaking. He detested me.

It was at the Los Angeles County Fair in Pomona. To please an old good family friend, Harold Richardson, I had agreed to be one of his crew in the first serious public wine-judging south of Sacramento, from whence had come all our official vinous nods until then. Of course we were frowned on, by anyone south of Santa Barbara, for stepping on hallowed tradition, but Harold felt that the time was right, and he asked a mixed lot to meet with him at the Fair Grounds "down south." I was the only female there, and in fact the first of my sex ever to be on a California wine panel, as far as I know.

Of course it was very hot in September, and I dressed for coolness and changed my usual personal habits only by cutting out all soap and toothpaste and lotions for two weeks; I did not smoke anyway, but I stopped any tea-coffee-wine-booze for five days before the judging. In other words, I was a Good Girl, a white Anglo-Saxon non-Christian.

The equipment for judging was very primitive then. For one thing, we were supposed to "do" about 180 bottled products in three days. For another, the "judges" were seated two by two at a long table with of course the bottles on-hand and the sparse glasses in front of each one and then a bucket, a plain old five-gallon bucket, between each pair. No dentist-office neat installations!



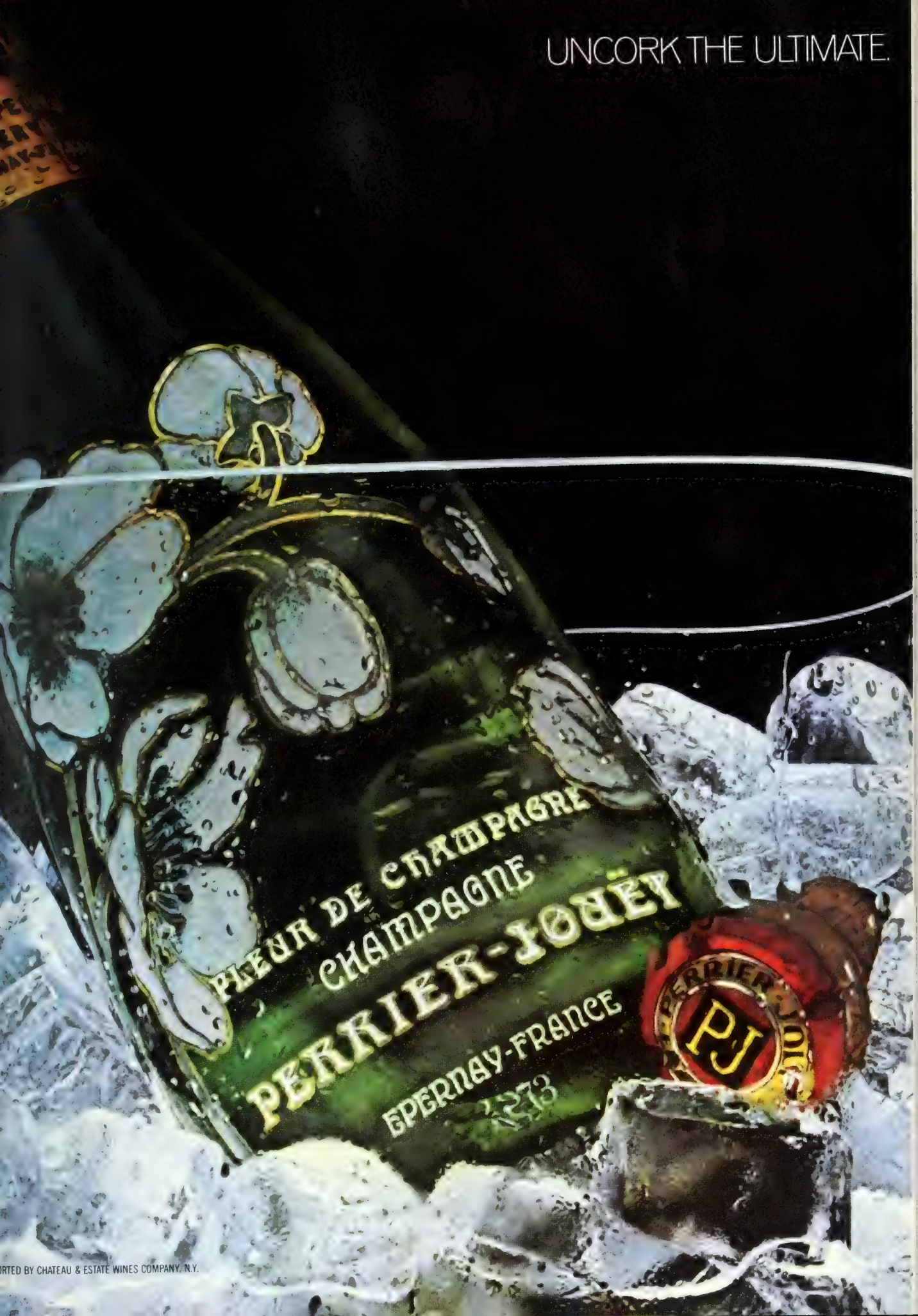
Angelo Pellegrini and M.F.K. Fisher sharing a bucket at the Los Angeles County Fair

The first day we judged white wines. The second we whipped through reds. The third and final day we did fruit wines in the morning and brandies after lunch, and toward the end of that day we swallowed quite a bit, instead of spitting it hopefully toward our partners and fairly deftly into our shared buckets.

I had a hard time spitting in public at first. I knew I would have to when I accepted Harold's invitation, because I had watched wine men do it nonchalantly in Burgundy and Switzerland. But they were always *men*. I had never seen a woman do it, probably because they had never gone into the courtyards outside their husbands' wineries when anyone was there. I did not count there as a woman, being a foreigner and by nature invisible anyway. But in Pomona, when I had to spit like a man facing my companion across the bucket and trying to guess what he thought of the wine we had just let swirl and unfold in our separate mouths, I was at first almost appalled at myself. I was nearing forty, and I had never done such a thing as *spit,* except in a closed private space, and alone.

My partner was Angelo Pellegrini. At least, that was what was marked on our cards and announced in the sheet Harold had sent to each judge. I admired Angelo very much, and felt awed that I would actually meet him at Harold's little gatherings. I reread *The Unprejudiced Palate,* and felt more strongly than ever that it was the first true statement I had yet read about living as it can and should be in the west.

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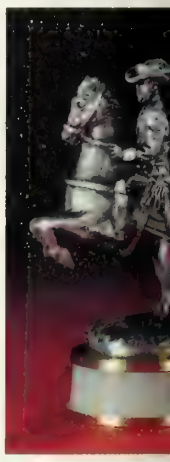
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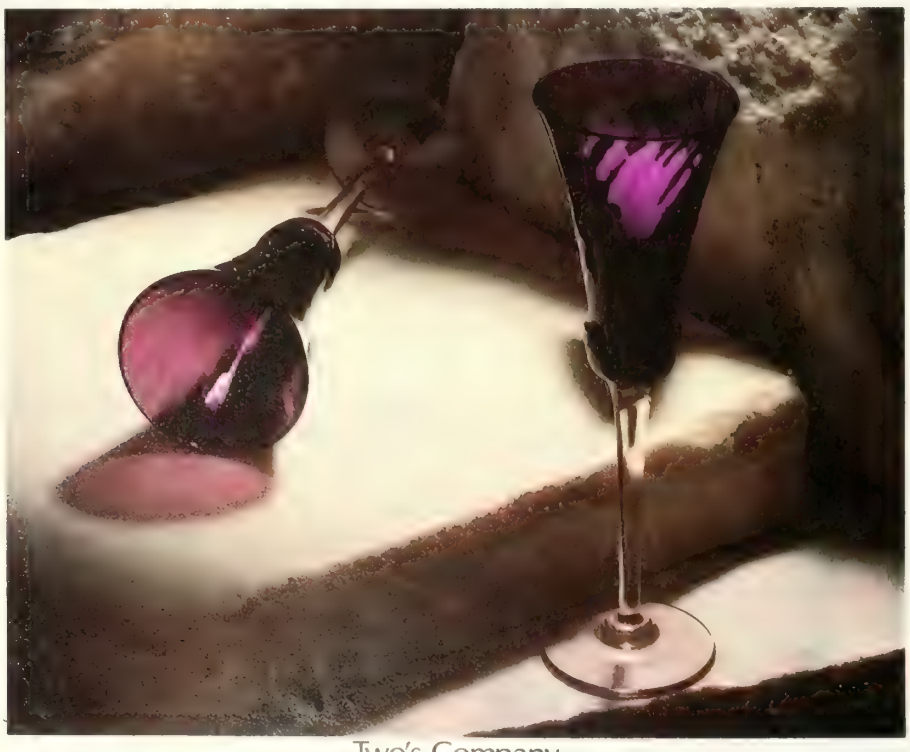
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ern coastal America that I love. It di not occur to me that I would have t *spit* in front of this Pan-like man. An for a while it looked as if I wouldn't.

I sat alone at my slot and pretende to taste a few white wines, and watche how my neighbors acted, and ever learned how to eject the juices withou dribbling, before Harold hurried in from his office with a short dark furi ous man fuming alongside. Introduc tions were impossible as Harold's replacement put us through our paces and we gradually got into our own rhythms of tasting, marking, moving along through the rows of unmarked bottles. Beside me Angelo inhaled and swirled and swished noisily, and spat contemptuously almost everywhere but into our bucket, our private shared spittoon.

He was plainly in a gigantic rage.

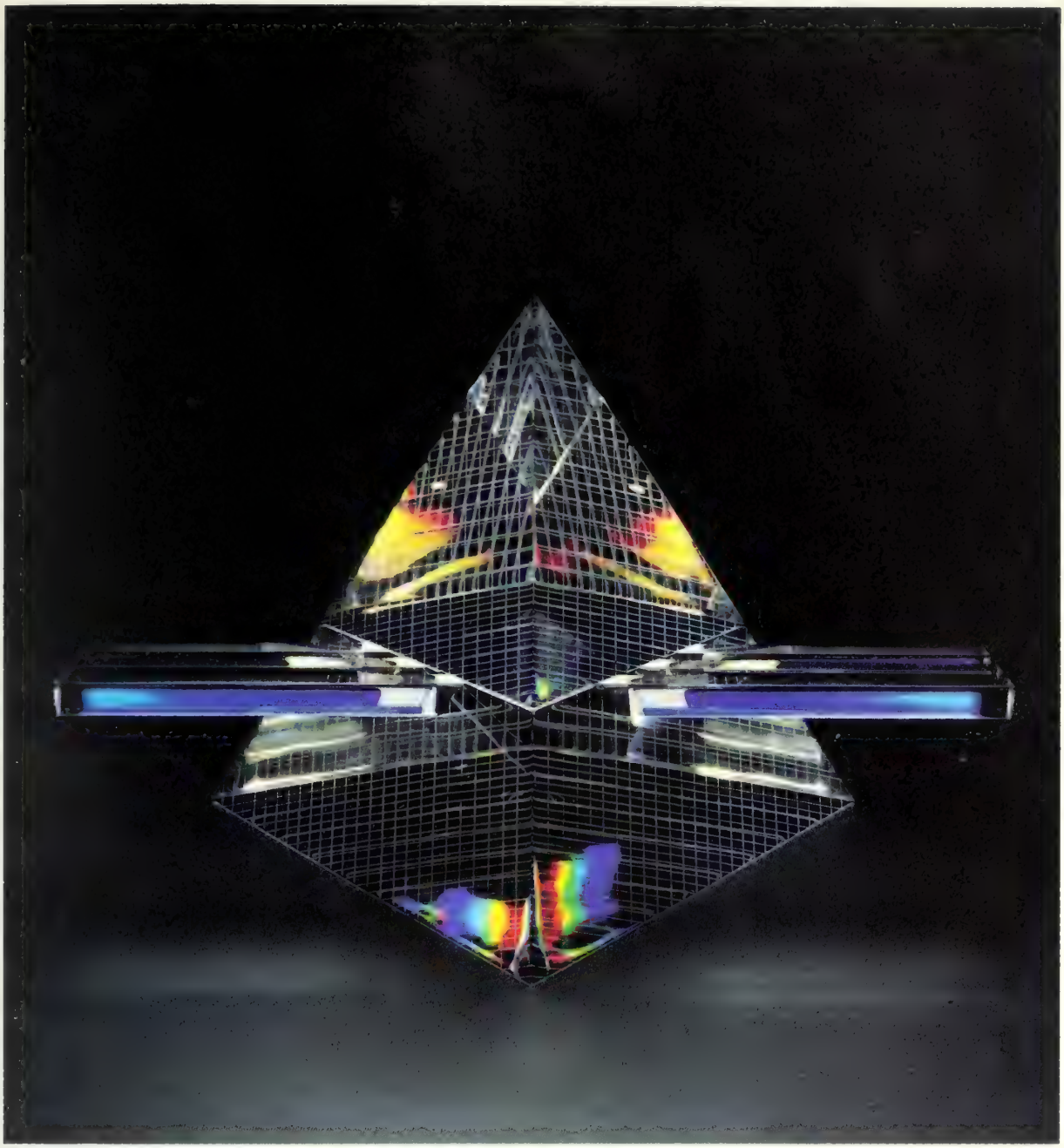
And at noon, after one of the most miserable mornings of my life, Harold told me that Angelo had roared into his office a few minutes before the judging and had said that he would never consent to have a woman present at a wine-tasting, much less sit next to *him*. He swore in two or three languages and was noisy in every possible way. He was, in other words, an insulted Italian, than which . . .

Harold, in his own more decorous way, was furious at having his actions called whatever Angelo called them, and finally he assumed all his legal sternness and said *put up or shut up*, and Angelo agreed to sit by me for one day.

But after lunch he stormed into Harold's office again and said that he could not go on. He was leaving for Seattle *this afternoon*.

Harold, by now smooth and silky and in general the successful criminal lawyer trying his most important case, had no need to counter-question his client to discover that not only was the person appointed as his fellow wine judge a female, but that she *smelled*. She smelled of *perfume*. She was plainly unfit to sit next to a highly qualified and respected wine man–author–*bon viveur*, a true American but also a living example of good Italian sensitivity and general machismo. "She must go," he said, "Or . . . *I* go. She stinks."

Of course all these painful stormings were a painful interruption to Harold's plans to direct and cosset and teach



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and in general bend his first selectec jury to his enological will. It was his show. He was supposed to be out there leading his flock, not closeted with a wild-eyed sputtering Italian professor. It was probably self-survival that got him to seat Angelo beside me again, still unintroduced and openly sneering, but able to function as a wine *judge*. (He still spat before I did, and in several directions, and never looked at me nor spoke.)

I was plainly unfit to sit next to a highly respected wine man–author–bon viveur, a living example of good Italian sensitivity. "She must go," he said, "Or I go. She stinks"

After work that night, Harold took me to dinner and, as soft-voiced and gentle as always, told me that Angelo Pellegrini, the man I so admired for his vital literary style, said I smelled. "To me, you do not," Harold added firmly, and I told him of my ascetic preparations for his unprecedented panel of wine judges, and he smiled approval in his usual avuncular-paternal manner, and said something like "Carry on!" We finished our unusually dull meal, saltless-sauceless-wineless for our palates' purity and next day's scheduled reds, and parted without visible tears.

It was a bad day, but at least Angelo was there the whole time. He never looked at me nor spoke, but his spitting was spotless. Whenever Harold picked up our scorecards he smiled a little, because we seemed to be marking the same things about the same bottles.

The next day was the last, thank God. I had never lived through such a miserable experience. My female honor felt bruised by the dark unsmiling man sitting with such obvious impatience and distaste beside me, sharing the same horrid bucket for our public rinsings, sucking in his breath when-

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ever I had to lean toward him so that I would not pollute his pristine taste-buds with my stench. I prayed for patience to get through the fruit wines, through the raw brandies, and away.

When we went into the plain bleak room, the glasses and first bottles and buckets were set out, and we placed ourselves, but Harold and Angelo were not there. In about ten minutes they hurried out and almost ran toward me, so that I stood up anxiously: was it bad news about my little girls, my ailing mother? Angelo, flashing a beautiful boyish giddying smile, bowed low over my hand, and kissed it passionately. Harold almost danced around us. Probably all the other judges, middle-aged respected medicos and tycoons and physicists, looked on with bemused patience, ignorant of our little drama, as Angelo begged me to forgive him for his cruel actions and Harold explained patchily but almost as passionately that Angelo's motel soap smelled, and therefore he smelled, and especially his hands smelled. *I did not.*

The rest is obvious. Years fell from my shoulders, and I was young, beautiful, desirable. Angelo was alive beside me, as only a healthy Italian can be. We spat in unison into the suddenly attractive puddle of fruit juice and water we shared, and a newspaper paparazzo from Los Angeles shot our jets in mid-air meeting just above the bucket. And halfway through the long last afternoon tasting of brandies we all began to *swallow,* and ignored most of the other rules, so that before we all parted after a fine meal of heavily spiced delicacies and plenty of our best bottles from the first two days, I was *carissima* forever, to the Pan of the Pacific coast, Angelo Pellegrini.

I still am, with the full consent of his wife, and the tacit agreement of scores of other fellow females in every direction from Seattle. Now and then Angelo remembers me, and sends me a clipping of something he has written, or a picture of his prize pumpkin, or a blurred snapshot of a new grandchild, all askew but eminently handsome and healthy because they came from Angelo Pellegrini: from him, the great god Pan of this Western world. □

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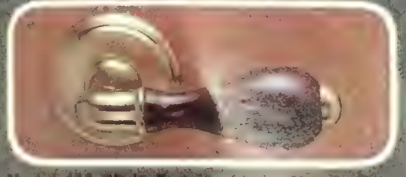
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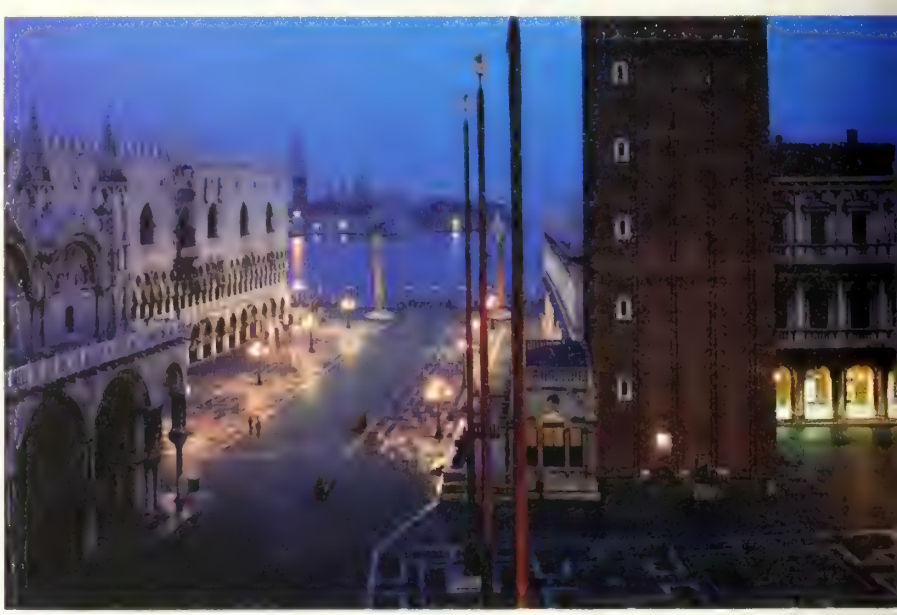
The secret pleasures of Venice at Christmastime

By Jason Epstein

At Harry's on Christmas Eve the white-coated bartender, lit from above like a principal actor, places two perfect ice cubes in a gleaming water glass which he fills from a glass pitcher, holds the glass of ice water for an instant to the light, cocks his quattrocento head at his workmanship and places the glass on the bar, then turns to another customer, a smile of inquiry having replaced the concentrated gaze of the previous moment. Outside, the *calle* is nearly empty, its square paving stones wet from the cold fog off the canal, glistening in the light that spills from Missoni's window a few steps away where the sweaters and scarves tempt the eye downward to the mesmerizing rows of zeros printed on the discreet easels beneath them.

The Piazza San Marco is also deserted. The light from the Procuratie Nuove and from Caffè Florian barely penetrates the chill mist and to see the shadowy domes of the Cathedral one must walk half the length of the square. Between the Cathedral and the clock tower a solitary Christmas tree twinkles in the milky darkness. Except for the poinsettias in the lobby of the Gritti Palace Hotel, where the guests are mostly Americans, there are no other seasonal decorations. Christmas in Venice is a domestic holiday, and even the churches are somnolent. The great winter celebration here is Carnevale two months away, and during Christmas week the windows of the mask makers' shops are already full of Pulcinellos, Harlequins, and Pantaloons. The pagan heart beneath Venice's Christian vestments prefers the lean days at the end of winter when the season of the new lambs is at hand and barely acknowledges the northerner's delight in the rekindling of the sun after the long midwinter night.







December nights in Venice: a view, *top*, of San Marco and the Doges' Palace; *left*, Caffè Florian on Piazza San Marco; and, *above*, on the island of S. Giorgio, Palladio's S. Giorgio Maggiore.

In the warmth of Harry's Bar as the small downstairs room fills up for the evening, the animation both soothes and exhilarates. Harry's father, a Veronese who had been a waiter at the Grand Hotel, opened the place in 1930, named it for his backer, Harry Pickering, an American playboy, and then named his son Arrigo after the bar or the playboy or both. It is this son who now runs the place, spruce in his blue suit and red tie, alert as a sparrow to the minutiae of his surroundings.

Space in Venice is precious, reclaimed from the lagoon inch by inch over the centuries so that even the dead, except for those rich enough to

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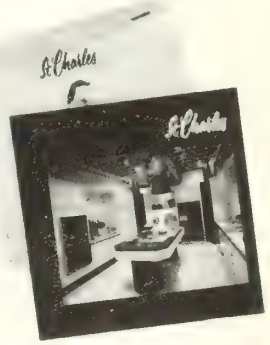
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afford their own plots, stay in their little marble drawers on the cemetery island of San Michele for only a dozen or so years before their bones are taken to an ossuary farther out in the lagoon. Yet so harmoniously are the buildings, the canals, and the pedestrian areas sublimated to sky and water that the tight Venetian spaces manage to seem generous. Especially in winter Venice is like a cozy ship at sea. Nowhere in Venice is this illusion of roominess within a confined space more ingeniously contrived than at Harry's, where under a low ceiling the tables and chairs are a quarter less than the normal size, the waiters spin and pivot as they carry their dishes amid the crowds waiting for tables at the end of the bar and prance on their heels like Spanish dancers as they bound with their trays down the nearly vertical gangway from the upstairs kitchens. A young waiter deposits a wedge of cake before a diner; an older hand, troubled by a failure of symmetry, takes a second to interrupt his own errand and points the cake directly at the diner's chest. Like Venice itself, Harry's is a triumph of precise gestures, as practiced as the turn of a gondolier's wrist as he spins his prow 45 degrees to make the inconceivably tight maneuver from one narrow canal into the next.

During the Christmas holiday when the busloads from the north who crowd the city in summertime are back at their jobs and the tourists come singly or in pairs or in snug little Japanese or American families, Harry's is nonetheless crowded and not simply with tourists. Arrigo offers a discount to favored local customers whose presence, like that of the miniaturized furniture, reduces the center of gravity, domesticates the place, makes one feel at home—what Henry James meant by "That queer air of sociability, of cousinship, of family life which makes up half the experience of Venice."

The other half is quite another matter for though Venice is surely "an immense collective apartment. . . where voices sound as in the corridor of a house, where the human step circulates as if it skirted the angles of furniture and shoes never wear out," it is also a university whose curriculum is itself. Venice is best studied in wintertime when the towering Caneletto skies over the Lido alternate with days so thick with fog that the façade of Santa Maria della Salute cannot be seen from the Piazzetta across the canal; the *vaporetti,* their radars spinning, feel their way from landing to landing and the unlit galleries at the Accademia are dark by noon. On such days as these Venice becomes its own essence, for not only have the miasmas of tourists lifted but the more robust Venetians have closed their shops and restaurants and departed for Cortina and Barbados, leaving the city to its more characteristically sedentary occupants.



Doges' Palace looming out of the winter fog

The least erotic of cities in season, Venice out of season is chastity itself, as if the reproductive impulse had long since subsided along with the city's commerce. Four centuries ago, the Serene Republic taxed the earnings of 11,654 registered prostitutes and required this source of revenue to show its ankles and bosoms to the trade so that the bridge over the canal where they worked was called Ponte delle Tette. But now even the spicy pasta made with olives, capers, anchovies, and red pepper known throughout Italy as *puttanesca* is called *Andalusia* in Venice. The ambience that seduced Casanova, Byron, and poor von Aschenbach has gone. The young assert themselves in more promising places, at their jobs on Terra Firma or at school in Padua. In winter especially the city belongs to connoisseurs of lost empires gently dissolving. "They are easily moved and often affectionate," Lawrence said of these Venetians, "but they rarely have any abiding passion of any sort," and that was sixty years ago. Today one wonders about Lawrence's "rarely."

This sobriety would be grim if Venice were simply another resort out of season, undressed and past its prime. But the sexlessness in fact clarifies and sharpens the senses as when a musical

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passage will now and then seem to disengage itself from the business of the concert hall and the exertions of the performers and autonomously thrill the ear. On Christmas morning the Frari is all but empty except for some tourists huddled by an animated crèche at the entrance, listening to recorded carols. But there is no one in the sacristy and in the stillness Bellini's triptych rises from its aesthetic and even its doctrinal setting and, serenely indifferent to the viewer's own interests, conveys an almost Asiatic confidence in the certainty of its baffling assumptions. The effect is awesome, humbling, and momentarily illuminating, as if the intervening centuries had fallen away and one were no longer surrounded by the domesticity Henry James described but by quattrocento Venice in all its proud power, "*la plus triumphante cité que jamais j'aye veue,*" according to a French visitor who described the city a decade after Bellini completed his altarpiece.

This clarity persists throughout the winter afternoon dimmed only briefly by a lunch of *porcini* and a bottle of Tokay at Montin's on the Saint Barnabas Canal behind the Accademia where Venetian families seated in parallel rows at long tables eat their Christmas salmon. Later that day as the fading light in the Campo Morosini shades the Gothic doorway of the church of Saint Stephano, the eye catches the terrified features of a small child standing alone, stuffed into a quilted snowsuit so that his arms project almost perpendicularly. In an instant the flushed and quivering face collapses from dread into miserable incredulity and then into a worse terror while at the child's feet a flock of pigeons, oily as rats against the paving stones, circles and darts for crumbs. Separated from her besieged child by these birds and oblivious to the hideous drama from which a lifetime of mistrust seems likely to follow, an American mother calls robustly, "Come on, Phil. Come with me."

Prospective Christmas visitors should know that winters are often mild in Venice, like the one just past, but they can turn bitter for days at a time, so that ice sparkles on the lagoon, and on cold mornings from a window on the Grand Canal one may see blocks of ice drifting by. Depending on the vagaries of the moon, Venice can also flood in winter for a day or two at a time, as it did just before this past Christmas when the Piazza was two feet under water on December 22. At such times gondolas may float to the doors of the Cathedral, though the more usual transit is by way of temporary catwalks called *passerelle* that are stored between floods on the pedestrian ways like bare banquet tables or lifeboats. But the fleeting inconvenience of the *acqua alta* is trivial compared to the invigorating tranquility of a Venetian Christmas when one's main exertion is craning the neck and narrowing the eyes to make out a Tintoretto in the fading light or climbing to the portico above the Cathedral's great doors to see the bronze horses, now safe from the corrosive air in a small room under the northernmost dome.

With the theaters closed for the season, evenings are over by the time one finishes dinner. The holiday parties to which visitors are likely to be invited tend to be joyless and stiff. The rich have gone elsewhere. Vespers at the Cathedral provides the main, perhaps the only, New Year festivity. A cheerful priest, not young but with the face of a boy, keeps time with two erect index fingers like matched metronomes as he sings the service, wagging his head in time to the music as a quartet of ancients, barely ambulatory in their sumptuous robes, chant in the choir behind him under the great gold and jeweled altar screen. The listeners are transients, their origin betrayed by their guidebooks—Venedig, Venise, Venezia.

In summertime, one can spend most of a day on Torcello, the all but deserted island at the northern edge of the lagoon where the first settlers of Venice established themselves a thousand years ago, driven to their watery refuge by invaders from the north. But in winter Torcello's ninth-century basilica is likely to close or be dark by noon, and visitors will be disappointed in their desire to see the great God-bearing Madonna who stares through unblinking Byzantine eyes at the Doomsday mosaic across the nave with its snake-ridden skulls and roasting sinners, and Saint Michael, floating above them separating the saved from the damned.

Torcello's outdoor restaurant, run by Harry's Bar, is also closed for the season so that in winter, if one happen

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to be exploring the lagoon, one goes for lunch instead to Burano, the island of lacemakers and fishermen, with its painted houses of red and yellow, orange and blue. Burano is only a short ride by boat from Torcello and in summer its restaurants—among the best in Venice—are likely to be overlooked in favor of Torcello's more glamorous arrangements. Though Burano is hardly more than a village, its inhabitants are said to speak in five distinct accents—the remnant of a polyglot past. The women sell lace to tourists from their shops on the Piazza Galuppi, dropping their prices almost without provocation if the rare wintertime customer seems likely to buy. The restaurants, on the other hand, have no trouble attracting customers for their grilled fish fresh from the lagoon, their pasta laden with squid or mussels, their sardines and eels and their version of *ttrami su,* the ubiquitous Venetian custard dessert, probably a relic of Austro-Hungarian hegemony, for its fussiness seems out of keeping with the simplicity of the Venetian menu.

The vivid, almost Caribbean look of Burano softens in the early winter sunset and the painted houses along the narrow canals convey a poignant domesticity that is positively enveloping. Through a lace curtain, caught by the breeze at an open window at street level, a young man can be seen, leaning back in his chair before a music stand, practicing complex scales on his clarinet as the magenta sky reflected in the canal turns dark.

In summertime, 150,000 tourists a day cross the jammed causeway that connects Venice to the mainland, but in wintertime the traffic is light and the swift passage by car to Terra Firma is like awakening in a strange room. By car it is only an hour or so to Padua on the old road along the Brenta Canal, where Palladio built his summer palaces for rich Venetians; and from Padua the trip to Verona, with its promise of truffle tart at the Twelve Apostles, is only a half hour on the autostrada. In Padua, Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel is empty except for a dozen or so English tourists whose sententious leader describes the frescoes as if he had memorized the passage in Hugh Honour's guide to Venice and the Veneto. "Early in the fourteenth century Scrovegni commissioned the chapel and ordered the frescoes to atone for his father's having been a moneylender," the Englishman recites, pointing to the panel over the entrance where the usurers are tied to bags of money. "You see how vivid these human figures are for the fourteenth century: how dramatic—how human—their expressions are: how three-dimensional. It would take Venice a century and a half to learn these humanistic techniques," he goes on. Giotto was anticipating the Renaissance, as Dante would also do, while the Venetian painters with their flat Byzantine icons were still in the Middle Ages, still tied to the East where individual lives didn't count for much. "By the beginning of the fourteenth century," he continues, departing now from Honour's text, "history had begun to move westward and would soon leave Venice behind just as the New York painters after the war left Paris behind."

How presumptuous of him, I thought, to believe that history moves like the sun from east to west, shining now on this city and then on the one beyond. But he had a point. On the eve of its farthest imperial reach Venice had already spawned its successors to the west and was probably bound even then to end up a Disneyland for romantic valetudinarians, who would one day subside along with their treasured city into the lagoon.

A few days later I was reminded of this Englishman's brutal theory of history's westward progress as Arrigo Cipriani, the proprietor of Harry's Bar, showed me the school he is building in Venice to train cadres of pastry chefs and establish them across Italy all the way to Milan and perhaps beyond in little cafés spun off from Harry's itself. His idea, probably as old as Venice, was, like the Englishman's, that the future belongs to the West, but if this is true, then the converse—that history belongs to the East—is perhaps also true, which may be why Henry James, among so many others of his kind, thought of Venice as a domestic place, as home. ▫



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CHINTZ CHARMING

From Mrs. Pepys to Mrs. Parish, smart decorators have known there's no better way to brighten a room than with cotton prints

By Mark Hampton

The other day, I was discussing some schemes for the redecoration of a room with an English acquaintance and she hit me with one of those remarks calculated to put you immediately on the defensive. "Only Americans use chintz in grand houses," she said. "In England, chintz is strictly for cottages." My Anglophilia and its attendant affectations are a constant source of annoyance to my family; my children cringe when I say "loo" or "drawing room." Nevertheless, I am a compleat Anglophile, and it is understandable that I bridled at the chintz accusation. It was like being caught eating my salad with the fish fork, and it is really wounding when the accusation is simply wrong.

Chintz is a word of many odd connotations, some of which are negative—need one point out the epithet "chintzy"? The word itself originally meant a sort of printed Indian cotton. It is, in fact, derived from the Hindu word *chint*. In the seventeenth century, Mrs. Pepys had a study lined with it. In the eighteenth century, clothes as well as furnishings were made of chintz. By the early nineteenth century, it had gained enough status to be used in the so-called best rooms of the house. Still, to a large number of people today, chintz is a material that should be confined to bedrooms or small sitting rooms or, to people like my English friend, to cottages. Cottages, indeed! All you have to do is look at any number of great English houses to see that they are full of rooms with chintz curtains and chintz-covered furniture. There is, for instance, a marvelous sitting room at Penshurst Place that typifies the sort of room we all mean when we talk about the "English Country House Style." The manor itself is fourteenth century. The room in question was gothicized in the early nineteenth century by Biagio Rebecca, and the decoration seems to have been going on ever since. The ceiling is mock Tudor. The chandelier is Louis XV, the paintings are Dutch and Italian. There is an enormous George I red-and-gold églomisé mirror, and the sofas are covered in, of all things, chintz. Castle Howard and Chatsworth are full of ravishing rooms with tremendous chintz curtains and furniture, some from the Regency period and some decorated in this century. Desmond Guinness's Leixlip Castle near Dublin has yards of chintz in practically every room. In short, chintz has been around for a long time. If it was used originally as a poor substitute for finer materials, that was long, long ago. For many years, it has been used for its own special appeal.



In a large city apartment, Denning & Fourcade used one chintz for the lower walls, another for seating.

Part of the charm of using cotton chintz in a grand room is treating it as though it were a material of great value, trimming curtains, for example, with fringe and rosettes and cording that one would more often reserve for far richer materials. The effect, although appropriate to the scale and ornamentation of important rooms, is a great deal less serious than what you would achieve by using damasks and velvets and brocades, and avoiding too much seriousness is a means of arriving at what to many of us is a desirable quality of informality and coziness, especially when we are decorating on a large scale. As Geoffrey Bennison said to me recently, "Why not be cozy?" State Rooms, for the most part, are not terribly cozy or terribly useful. The very fact that they were not used much accounts for their having survived as often as they have through history. The really interesting rooms, and the really comfortable rooms, are the ones that are lived in, and those are the rooms that wear out and are lost to us.

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Fowler, which just celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, must surely be credited with some of the current enthusiasm many of us share for English glazed chintz. The genius of the English decorators of the last fifty years lay in their ability to breathe life into the rooms they decorated, rooms that were often overwhelmingly grand architecturally. Rather than return those rooms to strict interpretations of their original states, filled with Genoese velvets and heavy brocaded silks, the most brilliant and influential of the English decorators looked for inspiration to the rooms that had evolved over the years through constant use and habitation. Having refined this style of careless informality, they then dubbed it the undecorated look. The warmth and color and simplicity of chintz played a big role in the development of this style. Nancy Lancaster, John Fowler's partner after Lady Colefax retired, was quoted a year or so ago as saying, "In everything, you want to understate; don't do everything to the last detail. Let other people's imagination work. Many rooms have been spoiled because people don't know when to stop." The luxury of Mrs. Lancaster's rooms may not look understated to our eyes, but in fact they exude a sense of comfort and fresh color that belies their true grandeur. They are incredibly inviting, and they are understated, given their context. Chintz, of course, is one of the means used to achieve this understatement. It is very pretty, it is not intimidating, and it has colorfulness that is always refreshing.

Understatement can be a euphemism for simply not having enough of whatever it takes to make a thing look finished or as good as it should. But properly handled, the elusive technique of understatement in decorating enhances the offhand mood that makes a room welcoming. As a friend of mine once said, "I hate a room where the only mistake in it is me."

American decorators, like their English counterparts, have leaned on the use of chintz to accomplish a welcoming atmosphere for many decades. The stories of Elsie de Wolfe and all the chintz she used at the old Colony Club are by now legendary. Rose Cumming, whose memory still lives on in the shop that bears her name, is also remembered for the delicious hand-blocked chintzes that she recolored and carried in her shops on Madison Avenue and Park Avenue. Her house on West 53rd Street had the prettiest chintz bedroom in the world, filled with giant hollyhocks in shades of blue and mauve. Dorothy Draper made cabbage roses printed on chintz her trademark. In Ben Sonnenberg's house on Gramercy Park—a house that was an unparalleled feast for the eyes—Mrs. Draper created a screening room/party room with red flocked stripes on the walls and rose-covered chintz chairs by the dozen that made you never want to go home. Ruby Ross Wood, Marian Hall, Eleanor Brown—they all used chintz wherever and whenever they felt like it.

More recently, Sister Parish has been the torchbearer for the sort of decoration that is so deeply rooted in the traditions of grand English houses. Mrs. Parish, whose friendship with Mrs. Lancaster and Mr. Fowler goes back over forty years, was even, for a brief time after the Second World War, affiliated with the London firm. Her rooms with their lavish use of chintzes have had an enormous effect on an entire generation of American decorators, who have been inspired to return to the English sources for further instruction and inspiration. One of the many lessons to be learned from Mrs. Parish's rooms is that by using chintz in place of richer, more ponderous materials, you are able to use more elaborate pieces of furniture without sacrificing the desired effect of inviting warmth. Gilded furniture, which symbolizes stifling formality to many people, takes on an entirely different mood when combined with chintz. If not humble, it at least assumes a degree of modesty that makes it seem appropriate in everyday spaces.

In a funny way, the English Country House style is all a game of addition and subtraction. In a really grand room, you have to subtract in order to make it comfortable. In rooms with less important architecture, you have to add in order to arrive at that pleasant degree of richness. Whether you are



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toning down overly formidable architecture with simple furniture, or bolstering prosaic architecture with fancy furniture, the perfect leavening agent is chintz. Antique carpets, whether needlepoint or any of the large category of loomed rugs, seem fresher when there is some light-hearted chintz nearby. And, of course, the possibilities of mixing in spots of color are limitless given the broad palette that makes up most chintz colorings. Still, there are no set formulas. You can always experiment.

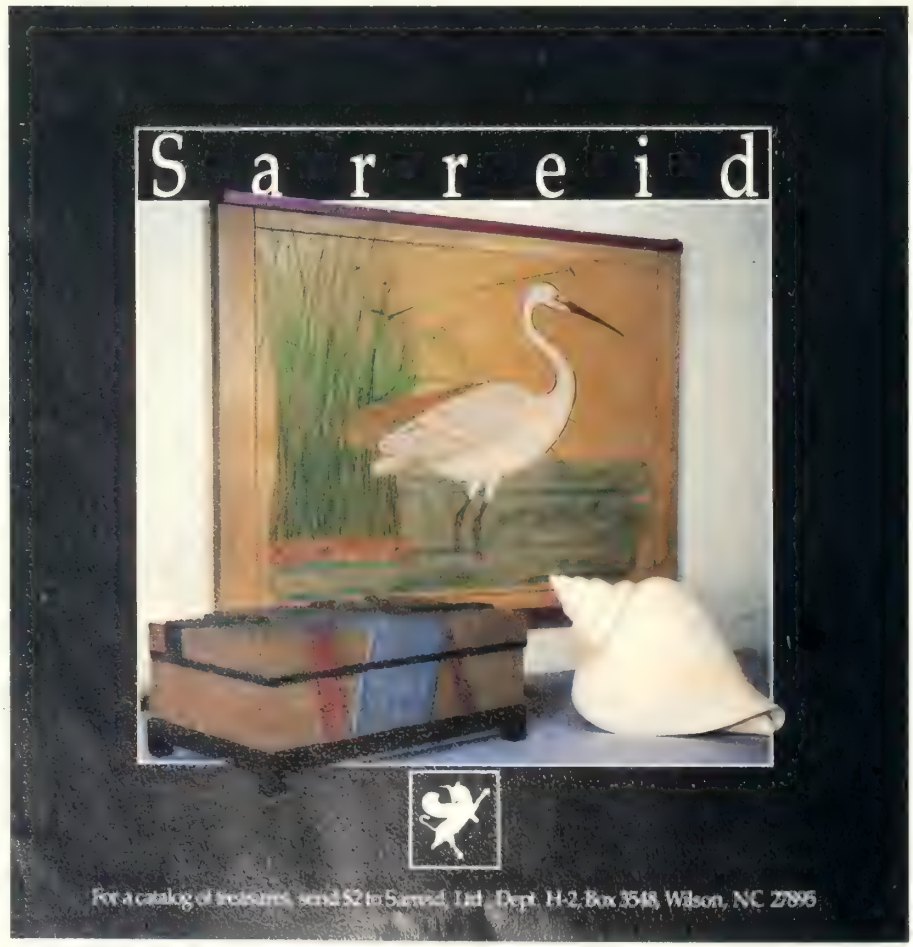
We have all seen rooms with one chintz slipcover in the midst of furniture covered in more sober materials and that one casual touch breaks the seriousness of the whole scheme. In other rooms, a few such casual pieces of furniture and some pillows may be all that is required. Elsewhere, chintz can be confined to the windows, surrounding the room with a uniform pattern. Finally, the entire room can be covered in it, including the walls. Leaf through any book of room designs from the Regency period and you will find the most extreme and enchanting proposals for tented rooms or draped rooms or any number of extravagant plans for the use of chintz—not by the yard but by the mile.

In the showrooms of Brunschwig & Fils, Clarence House, Cowtan & Tout, Rose Cumming, and Lee Jofa, to name only five companies known for dealing in chintz, there are some 900 different versions, not counting colorways. It would be fun to know the grand total of all chintzes available. Within the genre, there are types and colorways to suit every mood and every need. Some are large-scale and imposing and clearly date back to loftier eras of decoration. Some are small-scale and can be used for less demanding roles, including lining curtains or covering backs of pillows or small chairs. There are designs that are eighteenth-century rococo and Neoclassical. Victorian chintzes, typical of that endless span of time, can be Gothick, or bucolic with dogs and wild boars, or geometric, or saccharine with moss roses—the works. The influence of Chinese silks and wallpapers is constant in every period. Occasionally, detailed brocade patterns are translated into chintz designs down to the last leaf and tendril. I cannot think of a single period of decoration that has not provided us with its corresponding chintzes. There are even Art Deco patterns that remind one of Clarice Cliff ceramics.

On top of this mountainous supply, there are additional ways to achieve certain effects. If the glaze is stiff, a criticism I sometimes hear, any place that does preshrinking can simply wash it off. This is particularly helpful if you are trying to redo part of an existing room but not all of it and do not want the new piece or pieces to stand out. Also, if the background color is too light or too sharp, a good dyer can correct that with a tea-colored dye. This, of course, also washes off the glaze. I suppose some people are still intrepid enough to do the dipping in tea themselves, if the yardage is small.

Then there is always the question of quilting, a practice I avoid. I am reminded of those Connecticut farmhouses in forties movies (Connecticut was, of course, on the back lot at MGM), with their huge bow windows, fieldstone chimneys, and white, shaggy carpets. I believe the living room was always sunken, and there were double doors everywhere with Loretta Young or Joan Crawford floating through them. Anyway, the furniture in those rooms was always puffy, quilted chintz. Perhaps for that reason, I always associate quilting with rooms that belong in make-believe country houses. (Does the Duchess of Devonshire quilt her chintz? I don't think so.) Quilted materials certainly become more bulky and less flexible.

One of the original reasons for the popularity of chintz must be the fact that it was once so economical. The prices of today's versions of chintz prevent me from characterizing it as a particularly thrifty substitute for something else. But that is the whole point. It is not a substitute. It is a wonderful, durable, beautiful material. It can be used anywhere. It can be bought anywhere. If the name bothers you, call it glazed printed cotton. But never accuse it of being out of place. □



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by Bob Haak
Harry N. Abrams, 536 pp., $65

VICTORIAN PAINTERS
by Jeremy Maas
Abbeville Press, 272 pp., $49.95

AMERICAN IMPRESSIONISM
by William H. Gerdts
Abbeville Press, 336 pp., $85

MATISSE
by Pierre Schneider; translated by Michael Taylor and Bridget Strevens Romer
Rizzoli International, 752 pp., $95



John Singer Sargent, *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose,* 1885–86, The Tate Gallery

The two splendid albums of drawings—now in London and Paris—compiled in the middle years of the fifteenth century by the Venetian artist Jacopo Bellini are among the most mysterious works that have come down to us from the Italian Renaissance, for they fulfill no discernible function. They are not related to any known paintings by Jacopo Bellini himself or by his greater sons Giovanni and Gentile; nor do they provide records of architectural details, animals, and so on to serve as models for other artists: for this reason the title of "sketchbook" which is often given to them is entirely misleading. Most of the drawings are complete compositions of secular or religious subjects, arranged in no very obvious sequence, but they often contain the most inexplicable and haunting features. It is now generally (but not wholly persuasively) believed that the volumes were intended to constitute finished works of art in their own right. Be that as it may, the present facsimile edition of the Paris album—which because of its fragile condition is inaccessible to all but a very restricted number of scholars—makes a book of quite extraordinary appeal, as well as usefulness—and the usefulness is enhanced by a learned, if somewhat austere, presentation by the two leading authorities in the field.

Those peasants carousing in taverns or women going to market, though easily accessible in art galleries throughout the world, are (we now know) also much more mysterious than we used to think, and Bob Haak's very richly illustrated survey of seventeenth-century Dutch painting is probably the first general account to make known to a potentially wide public the substance of many heated controversies that have recently been enlivening scholarship in this once-placid field. These concern the degree to which exaggerated emphasis has been placed on that "home-


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ly, bourgeois realism" which has always enthralled lovers of Dutch art. In the first place, it has been argued, there was far more (and far better) grand historical, allegorical, and mythological painting than has usually been acknowledged; and, in the second place, what has seemed like realism for its own sake (as in the nineteenth-century concept of the term) was usually intended to be a form of half-disguised moralizing (warnings against lechery, greed, drunkenness, and so on), whose imagery was often drawn from arcane emblem books, popular literature, punning, and other sources with which the ordinary art lover is hardly very familiar. Haak takes a balanced line on both issues, and although his comments on individual pictures are not very exciting the extraordinary riches to be found in his book (which has an extensive bibliography) make it both useful and attractive.

To make a very convincing case for the merits of English and American nineteenth-century art (even when not judging them by the standards of the Italian Renaissance and the Dutch Seventeenth Century) is not easy, except as regards a very few, very familiar names. Jeremy Maas's book was first published in England a few years ago and cannot therefore take into account the huge mass of material that has appeared since then (some of the most interesting is due to his own subsequent researches). His well-illustrated book nonetheless includes many attractive (and many more bizarre) pictures by minor artists, often in private collections; and the arrangement by themes (fairy painters, the effects of photography, and so on) enables him to break away from the more conventional and boring type of art history and to provide observations which will intrigue social-, psycho-, and other historians.

The quality of the best American Impressionist painters is far superior to almost all equivalent English painting of the period, but it would surely be difficult to deny that, apart from local piety, one of the main satisfactions to be derived from Professor Gerdts's very full and well-illustrated discussion of their work comes from observing the varying degrees of intelligence, imagination, and success with which they absorbed French examples. Much of the English painting to be found in Maas's book is so exceedingly "provincial" that it has acquired the distinction of eccentricity. American painters showed themselves far more receptive to the best European art, but—with only a few outstanding exceptions—their own paintings constantly recall the superior models from whom they sought their inspiration.

With Matisse we return to Paris itself. Pierre Schneider's very long book devoted to him is neither a strict biography nor an orthodox monograph, though it contains a vast amount of material about both his life and works. Much of it consists of meditation—sometimes of a very personal kind—on the nature of his paintings. Thus of *La Danse* and *La Musique* he comments (of course among much else) that "it is in my own response that I must try to find the key to them. They grip me, they lift me off my feet. I am dazzled by these two paintings, almost blinded." On occasions this approach serves the valuable purpose (so often ignored by art historians) of reminding us that paintings should indeed grip the viewer. There are times, however, when the attempt to understand (and to explain) the nature of Matisse's art leads to a statement such as the following, which is surely much more confusing than helpful: "Thus, in elaborating a picture, Matisse called on not one but two principles: the law of contradiction and the law of repetition. A picture is not read as A/B, C/D, E/F, etc., but as A/B, A′/B′, A″/B″, and so on." Fortunately the 880 illustrations, of which 230 are in color, allow us (if we choose or have the capacity) to judge the value of such statements for ourselves, and this—combined with Schneider's wide and deep knowledge of this greatest of twentieth-century painters—makes the book a genuinely desirable one. □



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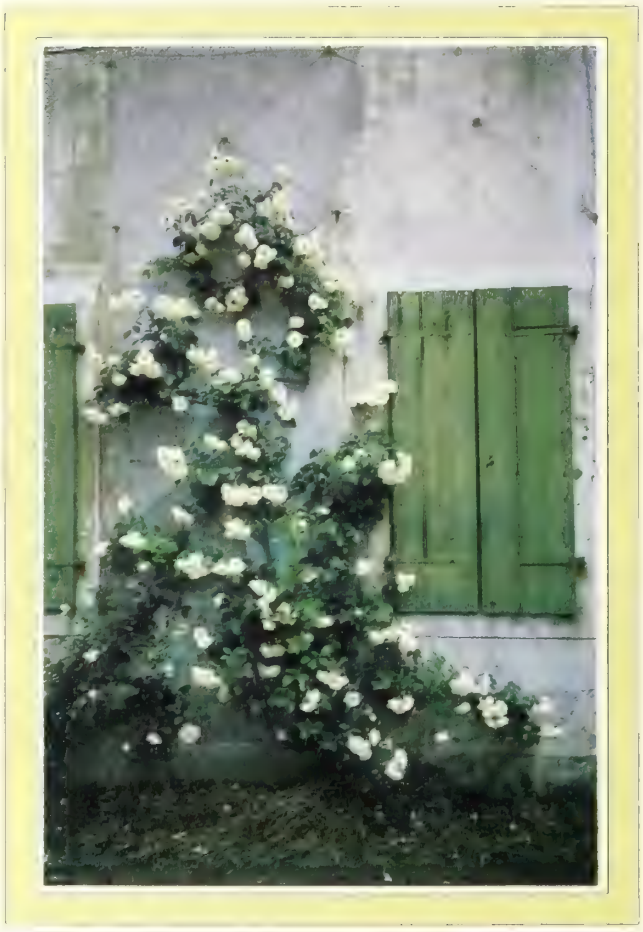
ANTIQUE FLOWERS

Like treasured old furniture, some of the world's most venerable plants can still be collected and used

By Thomas Christopher

For the gardener with a love of the past or an appetite for the unusual there is nothing more satisfying, more absorbing than collecting antique flowers. These survivors from another age share many of the virtues of other types of antiques; like a Chippendale chair or a Ming vase they are an expression of an aesthetic very different from our own, and their distinctive beauty and grace make them truly irreplaceable. They also provide an immediate, living link with the past. Those who plant an Autumn Damask Rose (*Rosa damascena bifera*) in their garden, for instance, can savor the same perfumed pink blossoms that delighted the Roman poet Vergil almost two thousand years ago, while a bed of the original Sweet Williams will still display the simple charm that it did in the day of their admirer and namesake, William Shakespeare. As with any antiques, however, locating these old-fashioned flowers may require extraordinary persistence and luck, and establishing the authenticity of your finds can involve a degree of connoisseurship worthy of a Berenson or Duveen.

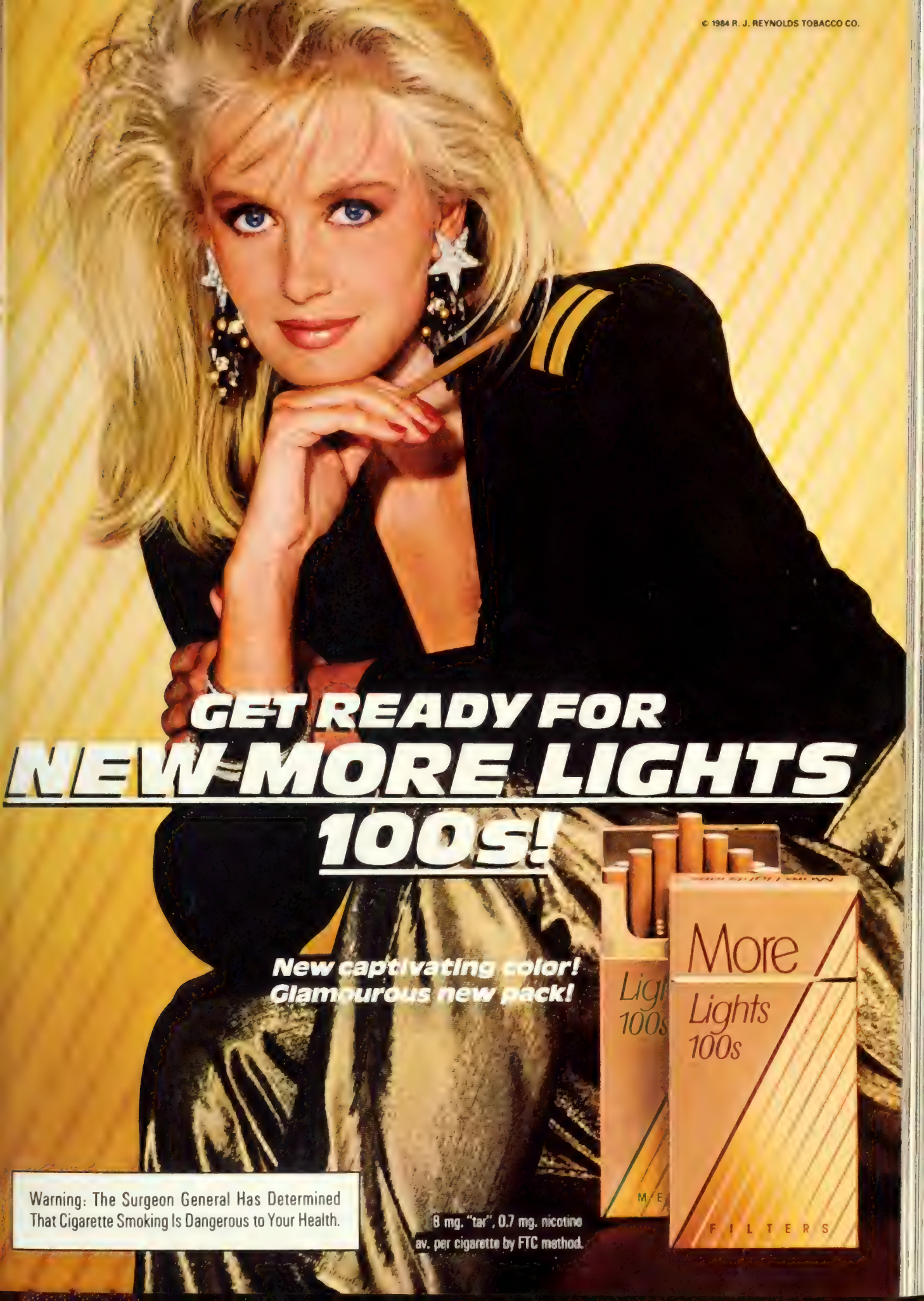
Having chosen a period or a type of flower that intrigues you the first step will be to familiarize yourself with all the available literature. This pursuit may well lead you into unexpected paths; my own work in restoring a turn-of-the-century estate, for example, led to long hours of poring over dusty, faded nursery catalogues in the attempt to discover just what flowers the architect had at his disposal, and I have since found these colorful relics to be a useful standby in my plant-collecting activities. Léonie Bell, an accomplished plant illustrator and garden writer who is also an expert on the subject of antique roses, has found it necessary in the course of her work to become thoroughly conversant with nineteenth-century rose growing manuals. *Prince's Manual of Roses,* for example, which was first published in 1846, is an invaluable source since William Prince, a famous New York nurseryman, was able to describe some nine hundred varieties from personal experience, and his descriptions have helped in the identification of many an old rose. Nor is the conscientious collector satisfied with a single source of information, no matter how instructive. Peter Hatch, the horticulturist who is restoring Thomas Jefferson's garden at Monticello, has had the rare good fortune to have at his disposal a detailed journal which the founding father kept of his activities in the garden. Nevertheless he is still supplementing this with material gleaned from other sources such as Curtis's *Botanical Magazine,* an illustrated plant journal of that era.



Nineteenth-century roses being trained to cover a wall.

Sometimes the would-be plant-collector may find the documentary evidence very difficult to interpret. Frank Anderson, a specialist on the garden plants of the Middle Ages, has found the illustrated herbals of that period to be a rich mine of information, but to understand them he had to teach himself to read medieval Latin and to decipher the hieroglyphic-like scripts of the medieval copyists. Of course, to someone with a scholarly turn of mind the research can prove as rewarding as the plants. Mr. Anderson, for instance,

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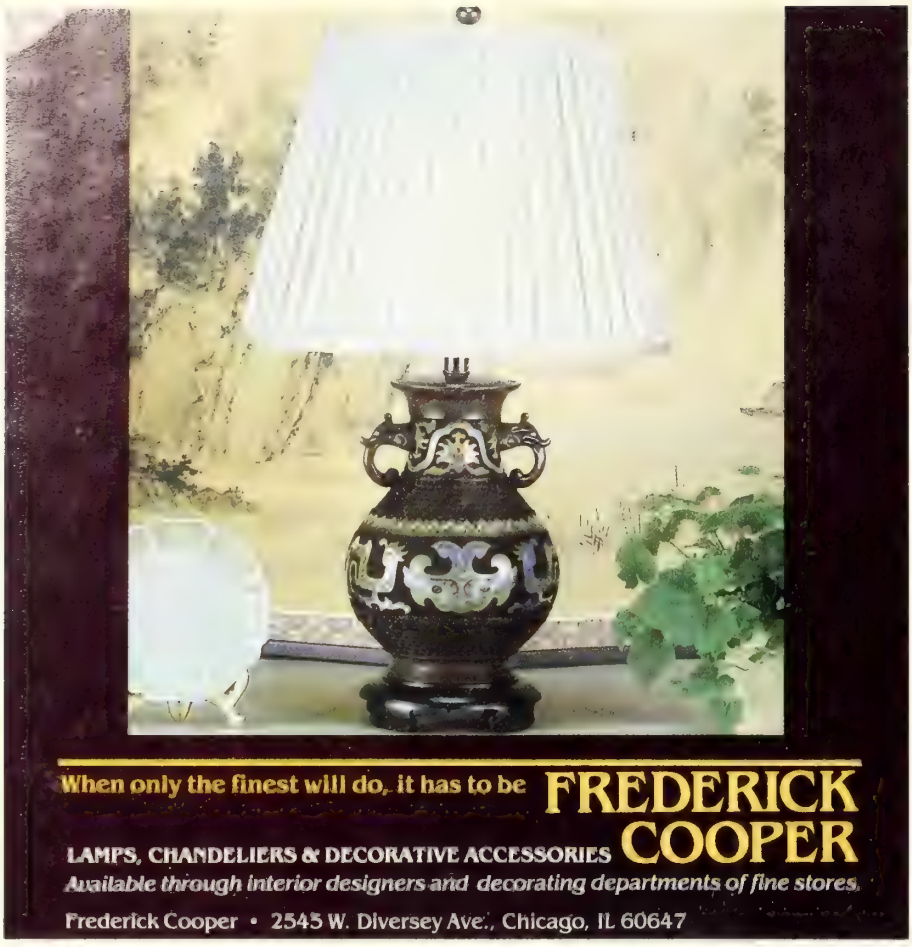
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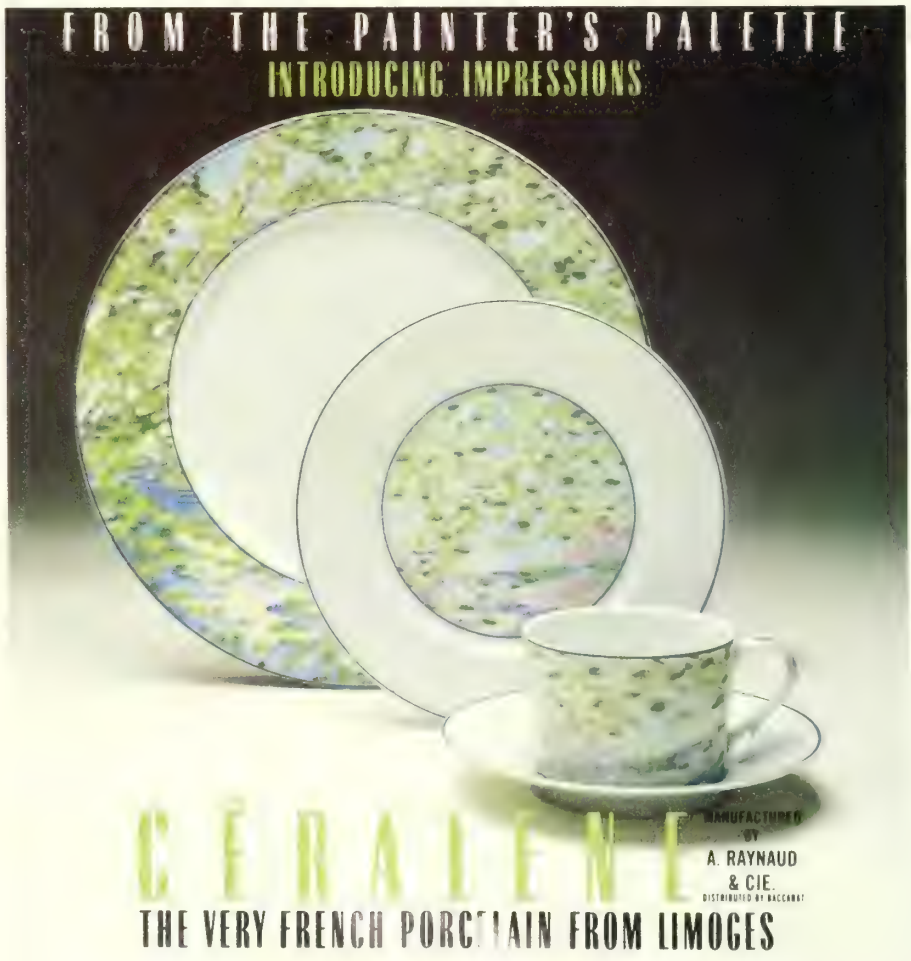
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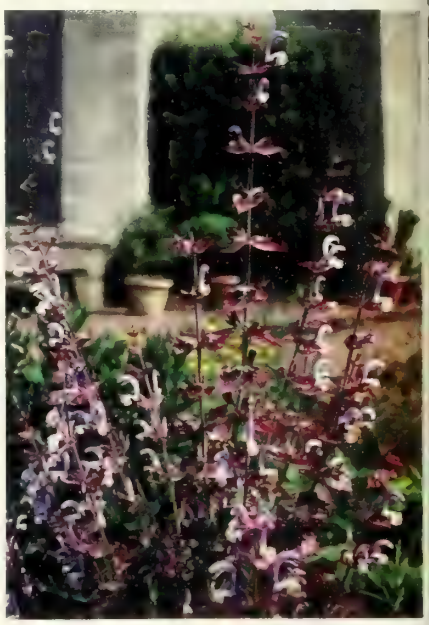
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Clary sage in the garden at The Cloisters in New York City.

became so fascinated by the early herbals that he has since written a number of books about them.

The art of the period can also provide vital clues about the garden flowers of remote ages. Peter Hatch knew from reading an account of a visit to Jefferson's White House that the President was an enthusiastic grower of geraniums, but the horticulturist was not certain just which types were available in the United States at that early date. Hatch found the beginning of an answer, though, in a painting that dated to 1801: Rembrandt Peale's portrait of his brother Rubens posed with a geranium. The painting is very realistic, so carefully observed, in fact, that it is possible to determine that Rubens's plant was a specimen of *Pelargonium inquinans*. Accordingly, this flower was awarded a spot in the Monticello garden. An even more dramatic example of the use of art is to be found in the garden that horticulturist Susan Leach has created at The Cloisters, New York's museum of medieval art. To a great extent she has let the collection of the museum itself dictate her choice of plants. Floral motifs from architectural ornamentation, illuminated manuscripts, paintings, even tapestries have been painstakingly analyzed and have yielded a rich harvest of information about the flowers that would have been found around the castles, churches,



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Forgeries, unfortunately, are just as common among the old-fashioned flowers as they are among any other class of antiques

and monasteries of medieval Europe

Having finally determined the exact species and varieties he wants to add to his collection, the antique-plant enthusiast is immediately presented with a new and equally challenging problem: locating a source of this superannuated nursery stock. Unfortunately, commercial nurseries exist to earn a profit, and as soon as a particular plant falls from fashion it is most often summarily dismissed from their catalogues. There are, however, a few delightful exceptions. Old-fashioned roses, in particular, have attracted a fervent band of partisans whose support has led to the creation of a number of small, specialized family-owned nurseries. Very often botanical gardens and horticultural societies preserve stocks of rare and unfashionable plants and sometimes the seeds of antique varieties can be obtained from them. Occasionally, though, collectors must go to extreme lengths to secure a particularly prized specimen. Deborah Peterson, a New York City garden designer, wanted a frankincense tree for a Biblical garden that she was creating at a synagogue, but to her dismay she found that no nursery in this country stocked them. Even worse, it developed that all the countries to which frankincense is native are hostile to the United States. Eventually, however, she was able to persuade a German friend, a soap manufacturer, to secure a supply of frankincense trees on the pretense that he needed them to produce perfumes for his soaps and relay them to her.

Without a doubt the most enjoyable way to acquire antique flowers is to collect them yourself. Just as the devotee of antique furniture can never pass a barn without wondering what forgotten treasures it contains, so do I thrill at the sight of an abandoned garden. I found my favorite old rose, a beautiful carmine-pink rugosa, struggling up through the weeds around an old Vermont farmhouse. I took half-a-dozen cuttings, only one of which took root, but this is now a thriving, sturdy bush, the pride of my garden. I never have been sure, though, whether I love this rose so much for its intrinsic beauty or for the memories it revives of that fresh spring morning in Vermont.

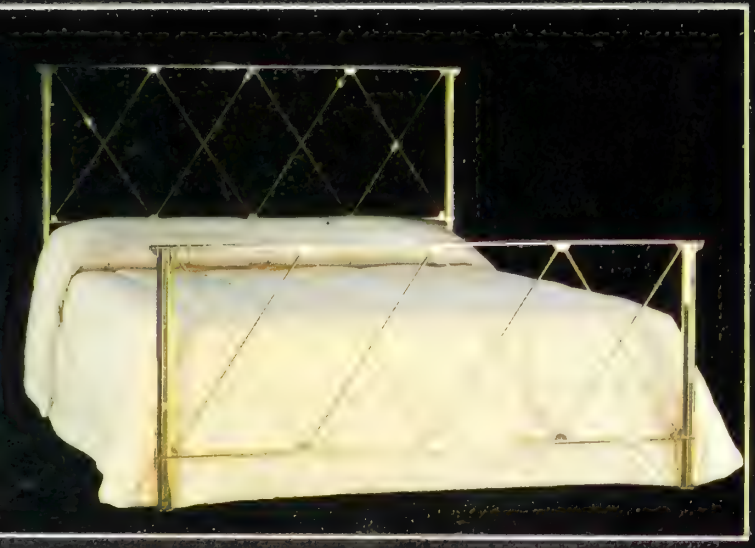
Forgeries, unfortunately, are just as common among the old-fashioned flowers as they are among any other class of antiques. These floral forgeries are not usually deliberate deceptions; more often they are just the result of the nurseryman's lack of familiarity with these uncommon plants. Nevertheless, this lack of malice does not make the deception any less annoying, especially since nurserymen generally resist correction. In the course of her search for the Musk Rose, a deliciously fragrant flower which has delighted gardeners since ancient times, Léonie Bell discovered the shrub advertised by English growers as the Musk Rose was not, in fact, the original type. What they were selling was an improved variety differing in many respects from the genuine article. She was able to prove this conclusively by references to the descriptions of two famous seventeenth-century plantsmen, John Gerard and John Parkinson. Yet despite all the evidence she was able to muster, it was a full eight years before her view was accepted and the original was reinstalled in its rightful place.

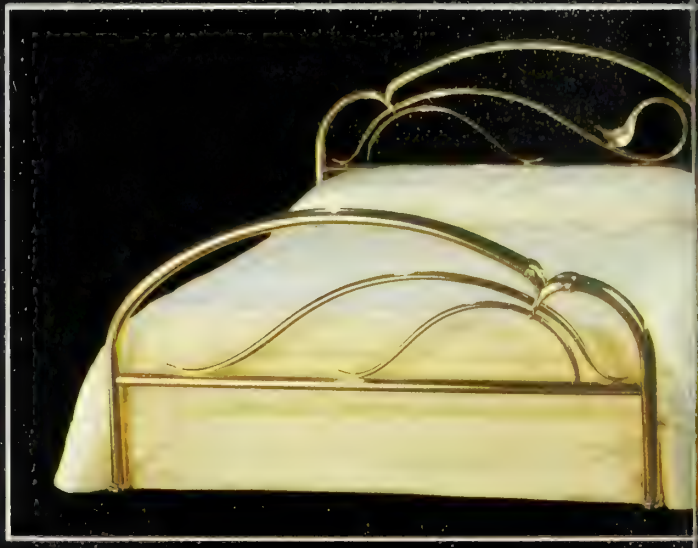
Given these difficulties, why do collectors persist? In part, because they enjoy the challenge. "The quest," as Peter Hatch terms it, the search for these rarities, can become addictive. The patient assembly of evidence, piece by piece, is as fascinating as a detective story and the thrill that greets success is unique. Collectors also persist because the rescue of these plants is worth any amount of trouble. These floral antiques are indeed priceless. They are our living horticultural heritage. □

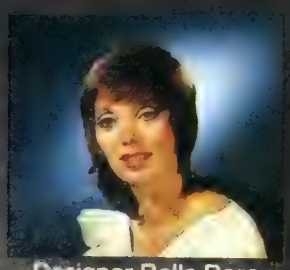



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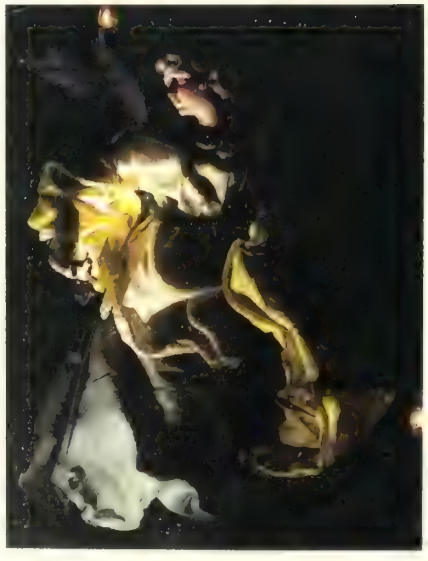


CRÈCHE COURSE

The Angel Tree by Linn Howard and Mary Jane Pool documents Loretta Hines Howard's lifelong passion for eighteenth-century Neapolitan Nativity figures

According to Saint Luke, it was an angel who told Mary she would give birth to the Infant King. At The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the joy of that Nativity is celebrated each year with a special exhibit of the eighteenth-century Neapolitan crèche figures that make up the Loretta Hines Howard Collection—a giant blue spruce encrusted with man's earthly image of angels and encircled with colorful figures enacting the wondrous events at the manger.

The small crèche figures (the tallest reaches no more than twenty inches) number nearly two hundred. Each one is a treasured work of art. Their flexible bodies are made of hemp, tow, and wire, their arms and legs of beautifully carved wood. Their heads, exquisitely sculpted of terra cotta, are polychromed, in celestial hues or the colors



In the Neapolitan crèche, eighteenth-century artists mixed realistically human figures with artistic ideals of celestial beauty.

of all the peoples of the earth. They pose and gesture in expectation and adoration. All turn toward the Babe in a setting of columns probably inspired by those of the Temple of Castor and Pollux in the Roman forum—a surprising placement, meant to dramatize the triumph of Christianity over paganism. To see the crèche and tree in the Metropolitan's Medieval Sculpture Hall, in front of the Spanish Choir Screen from the Cathedral of Valladolid, is to experience all the fantasy and realism, mysticism and earthiness, grandeur and intimacy that the Christmas season inspires.

Re-creating the happenings at the crib, or *presepio,* as it is called in Naples, is one of the most tender and enduring Christmas traditions. There are many accounts of early re-creations of the Nativity in crèche form in church



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writings and the publications of art historians. And there is a language to be learned. The expression "rocking the child" describes a religious practice in the Middle Ages of rocking a wooden infant in a cradle. The term "Bethlehem" refers to a group of stationary figures presented in a framed case. "Crèche," now a universal term, is a French word from the low Latin *cripia,* which means crib. In German crèche is *Krippe,* in Spanish, *pesebre.* In Italian a three-dimensional, realistic depiction of the scene at the manger is a *presepio.* An intimate grouping of the Holy Family is often called a *mistero.*

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, constructing and displaying Christmas crèches was an important devotional practice of the Jesuits, which they took with them to the far corners of the world. Jesuit missionaries in Canada wrote in 1642 that their Christmas crèches were a great success with the American Indians. By the eighteenth century, the passion for *presepi* had spread from the churches into houses and palaces. Nesta de Robeck, in *The Christmas Presepio in Italy* (Florence, 1934), paints a lively picture of presepio fervor in Naples at this time: "...It is said that four hundred Neapolitan churches annually set up their Presepio and many private houses too had their own 'Bethlehem' on which the owners spent vast sums of money, encouraged to do so by a famous preacher, Padre Rocco, who made the Presepio his particular object of devotion. His influence was enormous ... Advent was spent in a frenzy of preparation and Christmas became a social event with people rushing from house to house, church to church, visiting, admiring, criticising each other's Bethlehem. Often the Presepio occupied the whole floor of a house, sometimes even the whole house, different scenes being represented in different rooms and concerts of appropriate Nativity music held in honour of our distinguished guest."

It was the great beauty and inspirational quality of eighteenth-century Neapolitan crèche figures that led Loretta

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Howard to start her collection. Her eye for antiques and her interest in religious art began early, on family trips to museums and churches in Europe. In 1924, just before her marriage to Howell Howard, her mother found a small eighteenth-century Neapolitan crèche at Marshall Field's in Chicago and gave it to the bride for her new home in Dayton, Ohio. During her European honeymoon she looked for figures to add to the crèche and began the collecting that would become an important and continuing focus of her life.

Through the years Loretta Howard searched for crèches to add to her collection and to give to family and friends. In 1949 she gave a noble crèche of eighty figures with architectural background to the Benedictine monastery of Regina Laudis, in Connecticut. The crèche had been made for Victor Amadeus, the King of Sardinia, and was presented to him in 1720, the year of his coronation. In 1962 Mrs. Howard was invited by President and Mrs. Kennedy to arrange a crèche at the White House, and she continued to work with the White House throughout several administrations. In 1972 she gave a particularly splendid crèche to the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, in memory of her friend Helen Northrup Knox.

A highlight of Loretta Howard's collection, a crèche called "The Adoration of Angels," was exhibited in Paris in 1952 and brought to her attention by Francis Henry Taylor, who was then director of the Metropolitan Museum. The owner of the "Adoration" was Eugenio Catello, a noted collector in Naples with whom Mrs. Howard had already been corresponding for several years, after having been introduced by the noted art historian Dr. Rudolf Berliner. This crèche contained figures of the finest quality—thirty angels of exceptional beauty made it very desirable. Following three years of letters back and forth, the sale of the "Adoration," which represented three generations of Catello family collecting, was arranged.

Through their correspondence Loretta Howard had become very attached to Eugenio Catello, and she arranged a visit to Naples just to see him. She wrote: "I was met by an interpreter as I spoke no Italian. He took me to Mr. Catello's house where I was

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It is said that four hundred Neapolitan churches annually set up their Presepio

greeted by two very serious young men and a lovely young woman, all in deep mourning. They told me they were Mr. Catello's children and that he had just died. I was very shocked and quite spontaneously asked what had caused his death. They told me, 'joy!' I thought there must be some misunderstanding in the language, so I asked how that could be, and they told me this tale. Some years before, Mr. Catello's father had sold a magnificent crèche to the artist Sert. Mr. Catello heard that Sert was dead so he wrote to his widow in Paris to see if he could buy back the crèche. He never heard from her and then found out that she, too, had died. He was determined to locate the crèche. With the greatest difficulty, he finally found it and discovered it was in perfect condition as it had never been unpacked. He was so overcome with joy, he died. Many of the figures added to the Metropolitan crèche are from this collection."

When the "Adoration" arrived from Italy in 1955 without a traditional architectural background, Loretta Howard devised a way to put the figures into the family Christmas tree with angels swirling up to the top star. The effect was spectacular and was greatly admired. Robert Hale, her teacher at the Art Students League and a curator at the Metropolitan Museum, suggested to James Rorimer, the director, that he ask Loretta Howard to re-create her angel tree at the Museum. And so she did, in 1957 and 1958. After similar exhibitions at the Albright Gallery in Buffalo in 1962 and 1963, and at the Detroit Institute of Art in 1964, she gave the "Adoration" to the Metropolitan for its permanent collection. In 1965 she assembled the first glorious display, which has delighted and inspired millions of visitors. It is the way in which Loretta Howard combined the Neapolitan Nativity with the Northern European Christmas tree—towering tree and encircling figures, glowing lights and joyous music—that makes it a work of art pleasing to the spirit and the senses.

In an article about the collection published shortly thereafter, Olga Raggio, Chairman of the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts at the Metropolitan, says: "Stylistic comparisons with many signed figures in the collections of Naples and in a documented crèche in the Bavarian National Museum in Munich suggest that about half of the Howard angels should be credited to the best late-eighteenth-century masters: Giuseppe Sammartino (1720–1793), well-known for his monumental sculptures in marble and in stucco, his pupils Salvatore di Franco, Giuseppe Gori, and Angelo Viva, and Lorenzo Mosca (d. 1789), who was employed at the Royal Porcelain Factory at Capodimonte and as stage director of the Royal Christmas Crib.

"A sure theatrical instinct presided over the creation of a Neapolitan Christmas crèche. The world of the exotic was counterbalanced by the more homely world of humble shepherds and simple folk, who act out their emotions and speak the language of the heart. We see some of the shepherds, clad in rough sheepskin clothes, awakened from their sleep by the Angel of the Lord, dazzled by the light that suddenly breaks through the night or bemused by the celestial music that fills the heavens, their faces reflecting their feelings with pulsating vitality and truth. Nothing is conventional here, and the eighteenth century has hardly left us more lively and natural portraits than these. Academically trained artists, sometimes well-known as porcelain modelers—like Francesco Celebrano, to whom, among others, figures like these are often attributed—have abandoned here the formulas of the 'great art' in an effort to achieve that natural expression that was much sought after in Christmas crib figures. The magic of the theater and the warmth of simple, sincere emotions are still today the most endearing qualities of a Neapolitan crèche." □

From the forthcoming book *The Angel Tree* by Linn Howard and Mary Jane Pool to be published November 26 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright © 1984 by Linn Howard and Mary Jane Pool. Photocopyright © 1984 by Elliott Erwitt/MAGNUM

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A GIFT TO A GARDEN

"At Christmas I
no more desire a rose
Than wish a snow in
May's newfangled mirth;
But like of each thing that
in season grows...."

Since before Shakespeare's time a classical Italian garden has been in season all year long. At Villa Gamberaia near Florence, nature exposes the garden's clipped green beauty with a rare ornamental snow



PHOTOGRAPH BY BALTHAZAR KORAB



A FEAST OF THE IMAGINATION



One winter evening in the reign of Louis XV…"The palace was illuminated inside and out…time went on and still no sign of the King. At last…a very curious procession lurched blindly into the ballroom…yew trees, clipped like those in the garden outside…the King…for once…would be unrecognizeable…"

FROM MADAME DE POMPADOUR *BY NANCY MITFORD*

TOPIARY CONCEIT BY JOSÉ VILELA ROOM BY ARNOLD COPPER PHOTOGRAPHS BY SUSAN WOOD



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Fruit, garlands, and flowers by José Vilela; topiaries executed by 16th Century Topiaries, Newport; ballroom designed by Sir Charles Allom was redesigned by Arnold Copper for Beechwood at Scarborough, New York. Savonnerie carpet, Dildarian; 17th-century table, l'Antiquaire & The Connoisseur; Régence armchairs, Didier Aaron; wooden columns with bronze urns, Price Glover; William and Mary dining chairs, French & Co.; American portraits, Hirschl & Adler; 18th-century English consoles, commodes, and Russian silver, Schlesch & Garza; 18th-century knife urns, Stair & Co.; Georgian silver candlesticks, goblets, wine coasters, decanters, and vermeil cutlery, James Robinson. Tea table: 18th-century silver beaker, bell, and Victorian cake stand, Vito Giallo Antiques.



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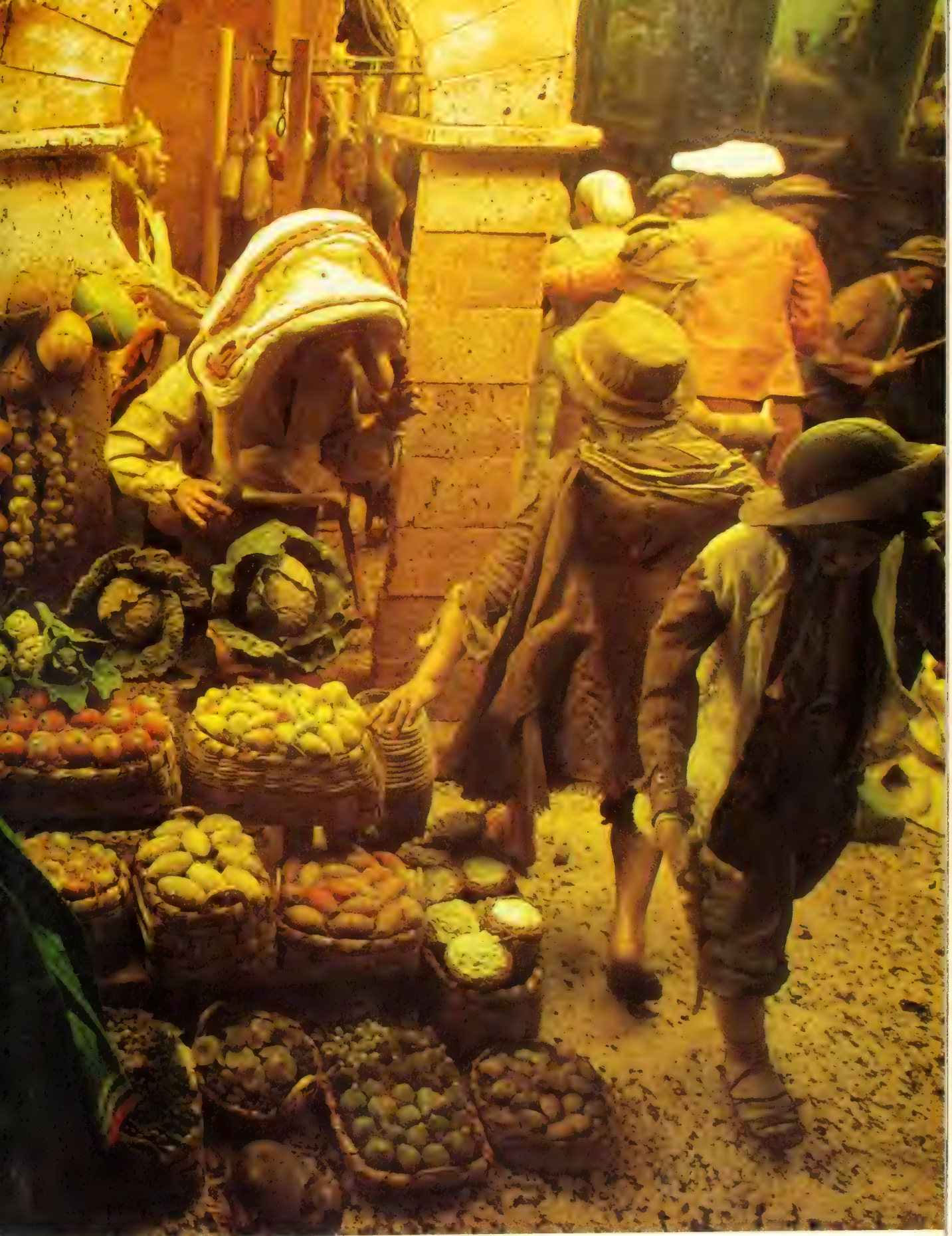


In an extraordinary crèche on the island of Mallorca, man's everyday activities meld with the Child's glorious birth

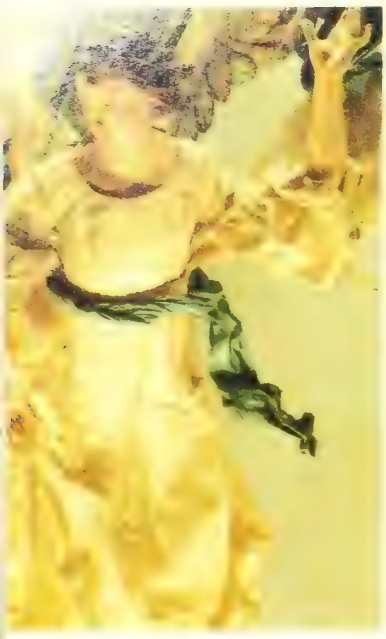
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACQUES DIRAND



Extolling the miracle with a crèche meant, abo



, expressing profound devotion to life itself









Like all the great eighteenth-century Neapolitan crèches, this one belonging to La Fundación Bartolomé March Servera in Palma de Mallorca joyously represents the gathering together of the world itself. Biblical shepherds walk among clearly Neapolitan buyers and sellers of minute produce; pink-cheeked butchers and bakers tend sausages and sweets; Turkish, Moorish, and African Kings ride on elephants, camels, and richly caparisoned horses; and the angel orchestra and choir are augmented by the local bagpiper











THE MONGIARDINO STYLE

In his own Milan apartment, the master illusionist exploits and celebrates the arts and crafts of decoration

BY JOHN RICHARDSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

I'm not a decorator," says Mongiardino, "I'm a creator of ambience, a scene designer, an architect, but *not* a decorator." Coming as it does from the begetter of some of today's most ornate interiors, this claim might well puzzle people who have not had the good fortune to visit Mongiardino's magical Milanese apartment. For its deliberately *délabré* patina and nostalgic air would suggest that nothing has changed since the end of the last century. Who indeed could blame a casual visitor for assuming that the present incumbent had inherited the apartment—lock, stock, and barrel—not from his parents but from his grandparents and that a visit from a decorator was, if anything, overdue?

In fact Mongiardino bought the apartment as recently as twenty years ago, whereupon he gutted and, in his capacity as an architect, totally remodeled it. Except for a few modest heirlooms, virtually everything is fake—contrived by the owner. But so cunningly has it all been done that the eye no less than the mind is fooled into perceiving the apartment as a miraculous *ottocento* survival—cultivated rooms that evoke the period of the *Macchiaioli* painters. In the circumstances, Mongiardino is quite right to describe himself as "a creator of ambience." Therein lies his artistry.

By way of explanation Mongiardino says that he wanted to re-create the atmosphere of his parents' handsome *palazzo*. He has certainly succeeded in manipulating the time warp, wafting the visitor back, in imagination, to the illustrious circle of Manzoni, Boito, and Verdi. Mongiardino himself enhances this illusion: with his abundant whiskers he actually resembles Verdi in middle years; he has the same blend of authority and geniality and a grand manner that is all the more attractive for being without artistic pretensions or fashionable airs. No wonder one merchant prince after another—Agnelli, Heinz, Niarchos, Rothschild, Thyssen, to name but a few—has put himself and his treasures into these gifted hands. No wonder Mongiardino is the most sought-after (and least available) exponent of the High Style today.

Deceit is Mongiardino's secret weapon. In this respect his work puts me in mind of Degas's astute observation: "a picture is something that requires as much cunning, trickery, and deceit as the perpetration of a crime." One feels that Mongiardino would rather paint wood to look like wood than have to contend with real appearances. A case in point is the set of large bookcases in the main salon: the kind of Neoclassical furniture favored by early-nineteenth-century cognoscenti. What could be more



Renzo Mongiardino, *preceding pages, left,* in front of a 17th-century chest painted to resemble onyx and marble. *Preceding pages, right* and *right:* In one of two studios in the apartment, samples of tiles, bits of marble, *verre églomisé,* reliquaries, interior renderings by two of his collaborators, and 19th-century engravings of furniture and pelmets adorn the walls.





A corner of the salon, *above,* with an Edwardian leather armchair; two Gothic chairs (one authentic, one a copy by Mongiardino) flank one of a set of painted doors (circa 1800) from a house in Brescia. *Opposite:* Dominating the same end of the salon, a Gothic mirror hangs over a *faux marbre* fireplace designed by Mongiardino, surrounded by reliquaries.

authentic looking? But—trust (or should one say don't trust?) Mongiardino—these bookcases turn out to have been conjured out of deal which assistants have stained and painted and patinated. Thanks to Mongiardino's instinctive understanding of scale and texture and the minutiae of style, his pastiches look more real than the real thing. The same goes for the "eighteenth-century" busts which adorn these "antiques"; they turn out to have been executed twenty rather than two hundred years ago. Don't, however, attribute this passion for illusion to some kind of hang-up but rather to a preoccupation with the overall aesthetic effect, at the expense (so far as his own apartment is concerned) of museum standards of authenticity or quality!

Working as he does for some of the world's most prestigious collectors, Mongiardino has become a past master at displaying his clients' treasures, a past master, above all, at exorcising the museum taint. But for his own surroundings he evidently prefers furniture that evokes a mood or enhances an ensemble to signed pieces that smack of period pedantry. Take, for instance, the set of well-worn leather furniture that surrounds the fireplace in the big room—furniture that Mongiardino's parents bought in London shortly before the First World War. Hardly the sort of thing one would find in the window of Mallet's or Aveline, but how perfectly its faded Edwardian swagger—shades of Lutyens and Elgar—harmonizes with the faded Italian swagger that characterizes Mongiardino's settings for himself. And how characteristic of a man who admits to preferring things that are the worse for wear, to complete this ensemble with a pouf contrived out of matching reddish leather—leather that has been distressed in the same degree and then appliquéd with a facsimile of the rusty patchwork that we find in the cur-





In the front hall, *this page* and *opposite*, objects mix with empire stool in architectural setting of stucco masonry and trompe-l'oeil coffered ceiling. Obelisk designed by Mongiardino in variety of simulated materials in front of a 17th-century painting from the Genoa *palazzo* where he grew up.





In Mongiardino's bedroom, vibrant blue damask wallpaper found in Genoa sets off a 19th-century Genoese portrait of children over bed draped in red velvet. Gouaches of interiors over the bedside table are by Lila de Nobili and bookcase to the left was designed by Mongiardino.



tains (authentically old ones: from a grandmother). And again how characteristic of Mongiardino *not* to smarten up his parental chairs with a barrage of cushions that "make a statement." Far from gilding the lily, as he did to such good effect at the Rothschilds' Hôtel Lambert, the maestro has been at pains in his own quarters to play things down. Hence all the contrivance that has been lavished on making things look the reverse of contrived.

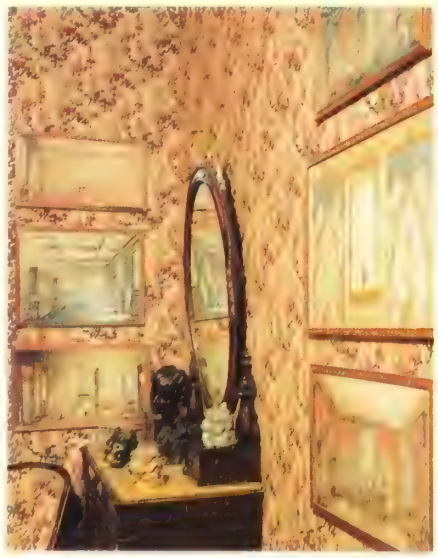
Whereas most decorators with a fashionable following endeavor to keep the not-so-raw materials of their trade from contaminating their private apartments, Mongiardino makes no bones about wallowing in his work. Evidence of this is everywhere. Samples of stuffs are as likely to be found by a drink tray or on a bedside table as by a drawing board. By the same token the big room has not been devised as a salon for entertaining so much as a study in which to discuss projects and pore over albums and portfolios. Stacks of these cover the surface of the vast table which takes up more than half the area of this vast room—a room that evokes the eighteenth-century rationalism of a *cabinet d'amateur* while also hinting at the nineteenth-century fantasy of Spalanzani's gallery in the *Tales of Hoffman.*

One of the most attractive—and incidentally most revealing—features of Mongiardino's rooms is the way he uses the samples, swatches, and sketches involved in his work as decorative elements. The walls of his studio constitute a lexicon of the materials and effects available to him: racks of every kind of tile, silvered panels of *lac à la Mecque,* fragments of *verre églomisé,* bits of marble, engravings of nineteenth-century upholstery and furniture, treatments of interiors by his two closest collaborators, Lila de Nobili (a childhood friend) and Emilio Carcano, and much else besides. The various sections are divided from one another by lengths of gilded molding ("made of plastic," says Mongiardino, who enjoys "reinventing old skills in terms of modern technology").

When questioned about the pride he takes in his métier, Mongiardino's enthusiasm never fails him. He sees art in terms of craft, the past in terms of the present, and declares that his dream is to live in a large house where he and his colleagues can work together on all manner of decorative projects, on the revival of dead or dying crafts as well as on the development of new techniques. "Like a medieval guild," says Mongiardino, who regards everything he does, even his own apartment, as "a joint effort for which all must share the credit." This idealism, this lack of worldliness or egotism is closer in spirit to William Morris's Kelmscott than the Decorators' Building.

"*Luxe, calme et fantaisie*"—to misquote Baudelaire—would seem to be the keynote of Mongiardino's work. If in his apartment the emphasis is more on the *calme* than the *luxe,* this can be attributed to the maestro's dislike of self-promotion or pampering. He has aimed at devising a far from luxurious décor that matches his reclusive-poetic temperament rather than one that would advertise his skills or serve as a vitrine for his wares. This high-minded approach is evident in the master bedroom, which is fastidious without being precious—what Berenson called "life-enhancing" without being eye-catching. Note the bold use of a damask-patterned wallpaper of an intense gentian blue. This blue—so difficult to use that cautious designers traditionally fight shy of it—holds the disparate elements of the room together besides engendering a celestial, Ingresque light.

And how touching the guest room is in its simplicity and, that rare quality, family piety. Unlike so many contemporary decorators—not to speak of their clients—who seek at all costs to dissociate themselves from their parents' style (or lack of it), Mongiardino has been at pains to commemorate the joys of his upper-class Genoese childhood. Presided over by a bravura portrait of the maestro's beautiful mother is the suite of 1880s-ish furniture that graced his parents' bedroom. Although big (and, by today's standards, ugly) for the space into which it has been squeezed, this suite "goes" wonderfully well, thanks largely to the way walls, beds, and chairs are covered with the same nineteenth-century floral linen made by Rubelli—a busy little pattern such as Vuillard loved to paint. Bath after bath of tea has given this stuff a look that I can only describe as Jamesian—a look that Visconti might have evoked if he had ever filmed *The Portrait of a Lady.*



In guest room, *above* and *opposite,* furniture from parents' Genoa *palazzo;* 19th-century watercolors hang against Rubelli fabric next to bureau, and a 1913 Boldini-style portrait of Mongiardino's mother by Maggi, a Turin painter, is above the bed.

Theatrical? Not really. The fact that Mongiardino has executed some marvelous stage settings (including a memorable *Tosca* for Covent Garden) manifests itself in his more dramatic interiors. But Mongiardino's theatricality is more a matter of improvisation and above all illusionism. How he delights in metamorphosis for its own sake! Just as a theatrical designer can conjure an ocean out of light projected onto lengths of scrim, Mongiardino transforms Lincrusta into *cuir de Cordoue,* plastic into porphyry and, for all I know, dross into gold. Most imaginative of all is the set of curtains that he devised for Marie-Hélène de Rothschild's bedroom in the Hôtel Lambert in imitation of a seventeenth-century Herat carpet. These amazingly sumptuous hangings were fabricated out of humble materials like jute and terry cloth, dyed and shaved and appliquéd and subjected to heaven knows what other arcane forms of distressing.

His theatrical sense likewise enables Mongiardino to evoke a wealth of atmos- *(Text continued on page 218)*

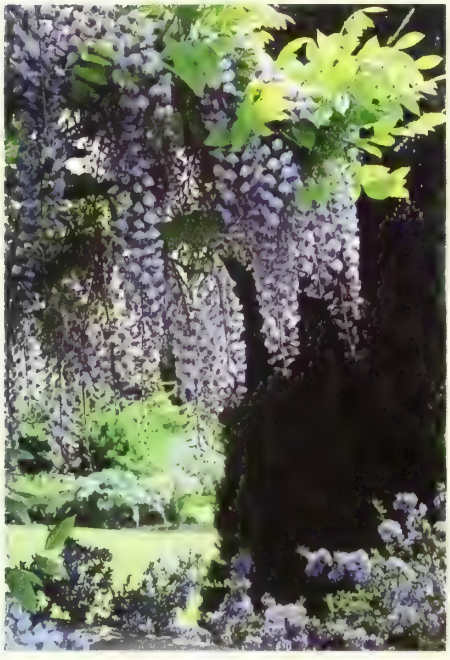




In the salon Mongiardino designed the bookcases and moldings around ceiling. According to Mongiardino, all the furnishings and decorative elements are pastiches made to his design, except for the patchwork curtains from his grandmother's house.


GIOVAN BATTISTA MORONI

LARTIGUE'S ENGLISH SPRING



A portfolio of views in great gardens and along country roads taken this May, a few weeks before his ninetieth birthday, by the great French photographer Jacques-Henri Lartigue

Wisteria, Burford House at Tunbury Wells, *above*. Yew Walk, Sissinghurst Castle, Kent, *opposite*





Along the moat, Sissinghurst



Grove of beech trees, Bowood

How does one travel with a myth? The answer is simple. With Wellington boots, shooting sticks, maxi umbrellas, and an electric heating pad.

When I was told that I was going to have the job of being Jacques Lartigue's "nanny" during his discovery of English Gardens, I was understandably and suitably thrilled. This ninety-year-old master, who after years of capturing on celluloid changing aspects of French life, the elegant Parisienne, the great artists of the last decades, enchanting children gamboling through the Tuileries, was at last about to open a new leaf in his unending collection of mesmerizing photograph albums: gardens. As I later came to understand his vision a utopian acre of herbaceous border, planted by a fictitious team of Capability Brown, Russell Page, Roberto Burle-Marx, and Gertrude Jekyll, weeded over ten years by invisible hands and then left abandoned to become a riotous galaxy of color, smells, texture, and glory. A secret haven waiting to be discovered by his probing lens.

But first let me describe my traveling companions. Allow me to start with Florette Lartigue: physically a cross between a Memling and Toulouse-Lautrec's Goulue, the most devoted and loving wife anyone could dream of. Always a thought ahead of her husband, thinking only of his comfort, health, and well-being, his business manager, his muse, interpreter, and public-relations counselor. Next our hero himself: Jacques-Henri Lartigue, one week away from his ninetieth birthday, endowed with a marvelous thatch of snow-white hair, the brightest twinkling blue eyes, the mischievous face of a benign yet enquiring hobbit, a brain like a steel trap, and dressed in the most glorious series of swinging clothes such as Oxford-



Clematis montana and white lilacs on a Cotswold cottage

shire, Gloucester, and Wiltshire had never seen before. Dapper, that's the word I need. Canary-yellow jeans to match the glorious fields of flowering rape stretching out to the horizon. Five different colors of rainbow-hued jogging shoes. Sweaters knitted and reembroidered by some of his many "admirers" with shooting stars and constellations. The whole image adorned by a camouflage canvas pudding hat, which for some mysterious reason seemed to make him feel he was blending into the countryside and quite invisible.

To aid and abet us, a charming English photographic assistant, Martin Hill, who although he started the trip without a word of French, and was quite rightly in awe of working with Mr. Lartigue, ended up fluent in that language, but I am afraid convinced forever that all the French are mad.

The plotting of this expedition had been quite carefully timed to coincide with riotous beds of peonies, rampant walls of wisteria and clematis, tunnels of laburnum, and all that the glorious English countryside reveals in early June to the admiring botanist. Alas, this was not to be our lot. Easter having passed in the midst of an epic heat wave, Siberia had its revenge and for the next six weeks it was a moot point whether to turn up the central heating, or to prepare for Noah's immediate arrival in view of the drastic rainfall.

All dressed in ski clothes and gun boots but buoyed up by the weatherman's promise of blazing sun to come we splashed our way down to Sissinghurst, thrilling J.L. with enchanting tales of Vita Sackville-West; the charm and elegance of the lovely white garden he was about to see; the perfection of the world-famed herb garden he was



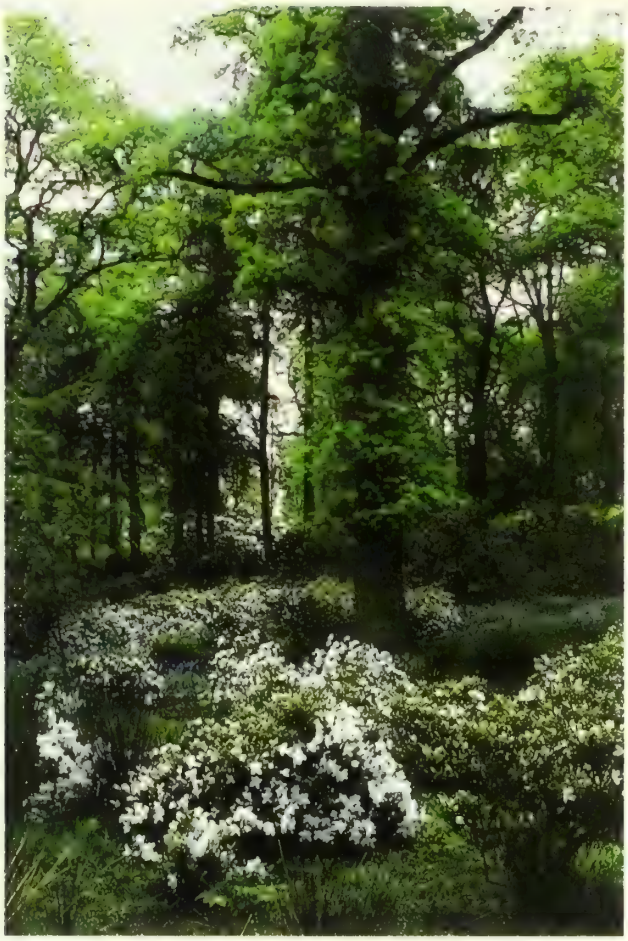


Field of rape between Broadway and Moreton-in-Marsh



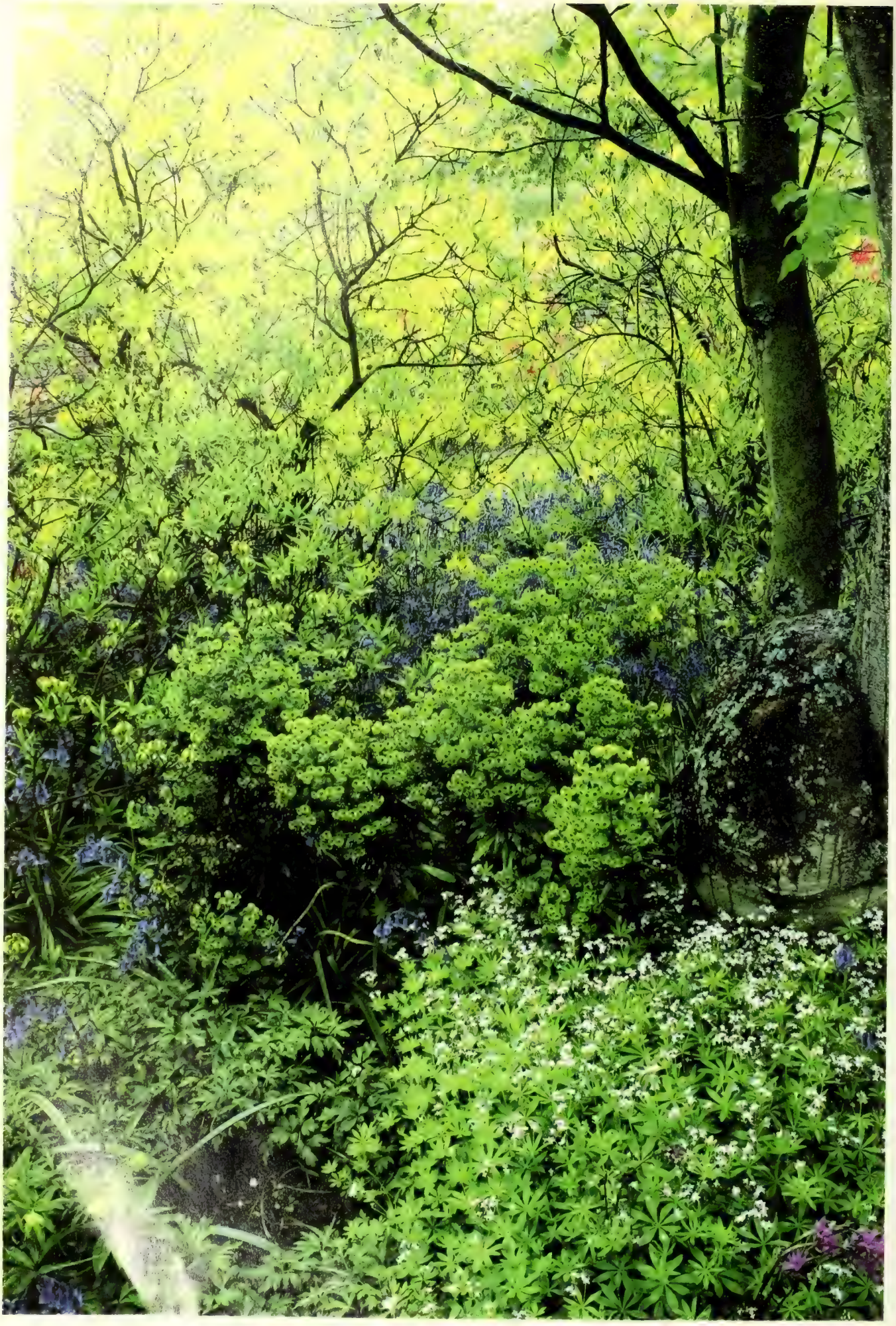
A tunnel of trained limes, Hidcote Manor, *above*. The garden known as Delos, Sissinghurst, *below*.





A rhododendron walk, Bowood, *above*. View to the pillar garden, Hidcote, *below*.







Hosta, wild bluebells, yellow azaleas at Sissinghurst, *above. Opposite:* In the Nuttery at Sissinghurst, sweet woodruff, *Helleborus orientalis, Euphorbia robbiae,* and azaleas under the trees.

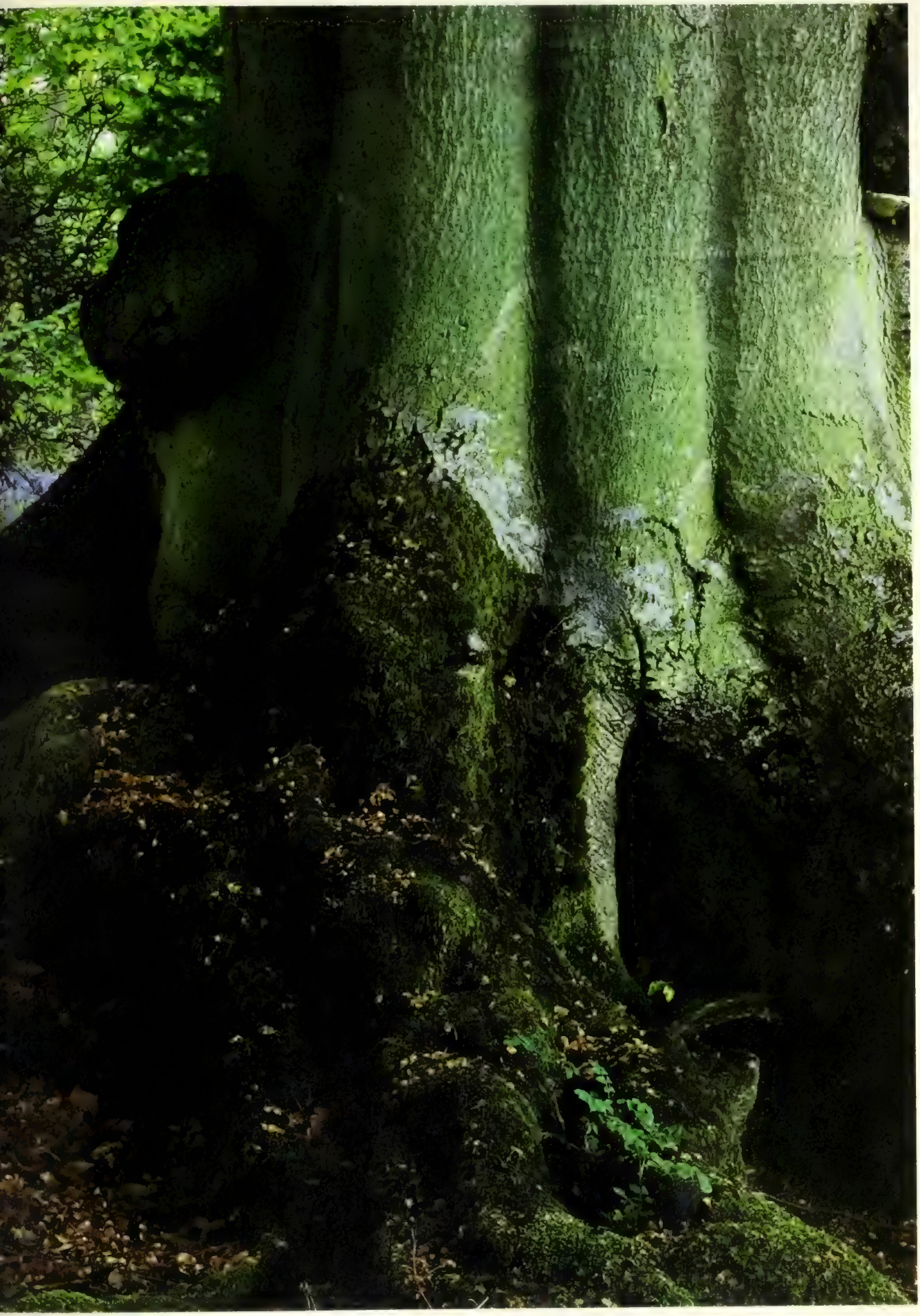
about to admire. With ankle-deep mud and a permanent battle to "keep the lens dry" we tottered through Kent, Wiltshire, Gloucester, Worcestershire, and Oxfordshire, eternal hope springing in our hearts each evening as we valiantly listened with unending optimism to the weather reports on anticyclones, mass build-ups, and imminent glorious sunshine only to have our hopes dashed again the next day by sopping cotton-wool clouds one could almost touch.

Everyone was so kind and helpful. The Earl of Shelburne let us drive right through the fifty acres that form Bowood's amazing azalea and rhododendron park. From there we drove through a countryside of breath-taking beauty. White flowering hedgerows of hawthorn eight to ten feet high bordered the roads. Late-flowering fruit trees dripped in their sodden orchards, and the wind whistled. A glorious spectacle to behold. When the elements overcame the tripod's strength, Florette was to be seen, a human tripod, clutching her husband around the waist, her cheek laid lovingly against his back, a stalwart buffer that allowed him to stand up in a gale.

And gale there was. Hidcote Manor, gardening's Mecca, was lovely, but alas a glorious green mess, not a flower in sight, one month late because of the weather. We were still searching for the riotous profusion of blooms that Jacques had imagined in his mind. Mr. Treasure's famous clematis were shivering on a sodden wall and Lydney Parte's woodland paths squelched under a booted foot. Sezincote's Oriental water garden longed for an Indian sun and in the Priory at Kemerton the herbaceous border remained stubbornly green.

But myths come through. Dear Jacques rushed toward every ray of timid sun, unthwarted by the worst the elements could offer, and having produced a portrait of an English spring—not as he envisioned it but not untypical—returned to France to celebrate his ninetieth birthday in a galaxy of parties. P.S. He has asked if he can try again in July next year. Bliss. □ *By Sheila de Rochambeau*





Ancient beech tree in a bluebell wood, Bowood



FRENCH AND IRREVERENT

Tony and Susan Victoria's apartment in New York benefits from a family passion for whimsical and stylish French eighteenth-century furniture first collected by Tony's father Frederick Victoria, and now given new life and youth to suit a young family

BY NANCY RICHARDSON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY OBERTO GILI

Detail of carved wood curtains, *right,* that were inspired by an 18th-century theater prop. Next to the curtains is a mirror with its cornice removed and an 18th-century dressed picture. *Above:* French chinoiserie elements—a polychrome terra-cotta stove flanked by a pair of Venetian chinoiserie figures also in terra cotta—dominate one end of Tony and Susan Victoria's living room.





Large Regence and Louis XV furniture, sculptural chinoiserie figures, an eclectic mixture of chairs, and an impressive collection of clocks furnish the main sitting room.



Certain rooms in the Victoria apartment achieve their effect from the quantities of charming and curious objects they contain as well as from a talent Tony Victoria has for treating most furniture as if it too were an art object. Other rooms such as the hall, *right* and *opposite*, rely on a cool, simple arrangement. A panel from a Louis XVI boiserie and the cellist's chair below it are the first things you see when you come in the front door. *Below:* A Régence chair with a miniature chair sitting in it. The little chair was probably a test done by a journeyman about to become a master craftsman.





The old saying goes that it takes the bones of a garden thirty years to mature, and the same thing seems to be true of certain types of living quarters. This is certainly the case with Tony and Susan Victoria, who have just enlarged and rethought a New York apartment that takes its unusual character from a collection of French furniture, clocks, architectural elements, European porcelain and faïence, and chinoiserie decorations. The collection was started by Tony's father, Frederick P. Victoria, who before World War II established an antiques business in New York.

Fred Victoria responded to French furniture and objects with an intensity that affected the very nature of his business. It has always been a rule that dealers should not compete with their clients by becoming collectors themselves. But Fred was past worrying about such distinctions. He fell in love with his acquisitions, sometimes bringing them straight home, sometimes taking them into the shop. When things sold he kept track of their whereabouts and bought them back several times over a period of forty years. What attracted him was the decorative and unexpected rather than high-ticket masterpiece. He developed this taste in a little-explored area that formed a link between the two well-established avenues for collectors of French decorative arts: French palace furniture and the friendly rustic pieces known as French Provincial. He called his sort of thing château furniture, which included, besides oversized armoires and stylish but not fancy desks, big architectural bookcases and





A view of the living room and a smaller sitting room beyond, *above.* To either side of the door between the rooms are a pair of Sicilian 18th-century overdoor panels. They were bought years ago by Fred and Tony Victoria, who enjoyed tracing the various manifestations of the craze for Oriental motifs that fascinated Europeans in the 18th century. Under the right overdoor is a Sicilian mechanical figure in carved painted wood. Its head, cap, and arms move and its eyes roll with the help of small levers inside the trunk of the figure. Under the other Sicilian panel a miniature table stands on a full-sized one. Against the back of the desk in the foreground is a corner settee with an undulating back probably designed to go with the boiserie of a specific room. A *buffet á deux corps,* a two-part cabinet, gives an architectural feeling to the smaller room. Above it to the left, a Louis XIV bronze chimerical mask is hung up high so as not to frighten the children.

Tony Victoria likes the voluptuous, curvilinear lines of furniture from the first half of the 18th century such as the Régence *bas d'armoire, below.* On it Susan Victoria has arranged a still life in which two miniature chairs are objects as much as the faïence, clock, and urns. A clock and barometer exemplify what has always delighted the Victorias about French clocks. They are first decorative elements and secondly time pieces. The chinoiserie picture may be German from a pavilion of Augustus Rex. Fred Victoria bought it years ago, sold it to a client, and Tony recently bought it back at a house sale in upstate New York.





The bedroom, *left,* is filled with both chinoiserie and real Oriental elements placed against walls covered with Bailey Rose, a chintz available through Cowtan & Tout. The commode is black lacquer of an unusual silhouette made in China in the 18th century for the Dutch market. *Below:* A large trompe-l'oeil painting of a still life in a cupboard is by a Jesuit missionary, Giuseppe Castiglione, who worked in China and is credited with introducing perspective to the K'ang Hsi court. *Opposite:* The dining room, with Asheley Victoria sitting on top of a dining table her father had made from two huge sections of *parquet de Versailles* mounted on the legs from an old billiard table. Next to her is a crystal-and-bronze candelabrum made by Thomire for Catherine the Great's winter palace. Her brother, Freddy, sits in a miniature French chair.

overdoors that had once been part of a boiserie of a country château. He used the overdoors as if they were paintings. He also specialized in faïence and porcelain fruit and vegetables where the design was whimsical from its very inception and in the most exotic forms of chinoiserie. He was crazy about curious chairs, and his interest in clocks was practically obsessive. Though the eighteenth century is well known for comfort, Fred's arrangement of his own rooms was done purely for visual pleasure. Model chairs or miniature chairs where often placed in the seats of rare armchairs not only for the delight of that juxtaposition but also to prevent anyone from sitting down.

Tony Victoria grew up in an atmosphere where the obviously precious and the charming find were both treated as treasures. He, too, grew to love clocks, chinoiserie, porcelain vegetables, and chairs of all sorts. When Fred Victoria died a few years ago Tony was already well-established in the business. And recently he has set about reinterpreting his father's taste for a younger generation. At home that meant moving into his father's apartment from his own smaller one in the same landmark building. In the last years of his life, Fred's apartment had become a small museum to which a few friends were invited virtually one at a time. The apartment had almost an antiquarian quality, and it seemed charmingly far from the present. Tony and Susan wanted to open it up. In the big sitting room that meant changing the color of the walls from a

(Text continued on page 218)





FACETS OF PERFECTION

Richard Meier's latest house demonstrates why its architect remains the undisputed master of modern architectural form

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EZRA STOLLER

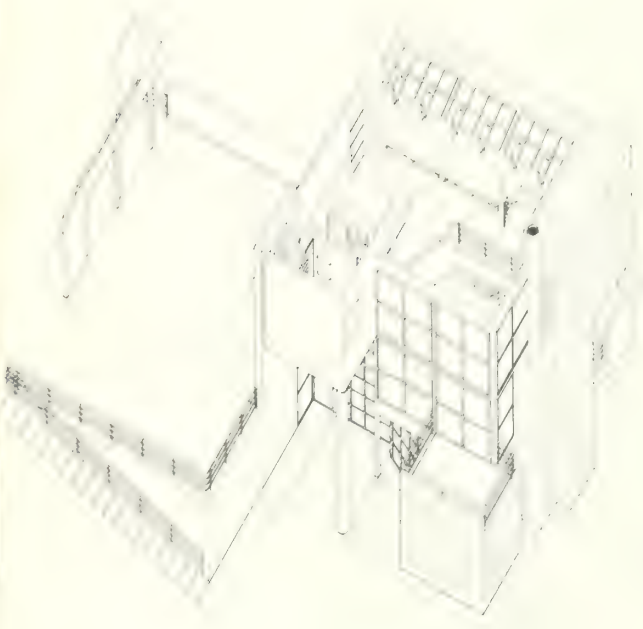


Tucked away on a tiny plot surrounded by towering trees in a venerable residential section of Pittsburgh, the Giovannitti house is Richard Meier's latest exploration of the Purist architectural vocabulary that has been the basis of his designs for the past two decades.





Set on a steeply sloping site, level with the street at the entry, *above,* and falling away sharply at the rear, *opposite,* the Giovannitti house recalls the early Modern villas seen and admired by Meier in Czechoslovakia as well as his own earlier Smith, Schamberg, and Douglas houses. *Below:* Axonometric drawing shows the house as a methodically "eroded" cube.



Richard Meier has always remained true to the stylistic principles that guided his career at its outset over twenty years ago. Unlike other international architects of the first rank such as James Stirling, Arata Isozaki, or Michael Graves, he has not gone off in radically new directions but rather has continued to mine the classic Modernist vocabulary, finding in it a degree of inspiration and expressiveness that has led to his peerless mastery of the Modernist mode. No one on the current scene can match his flawless proportional sense, but equally impressive is the way in which he continues to refine the economy of his means even as he develops an architecture of greater complexity and richness. Richard Meier never repeats himself, and he continues to discover new and eloquent ways of using a formal language that some say has become defunct.

Meier's originality is crystal clear in his Giovannitti house in Pittsburgh, a small jewel that reflects the brilliant afterglow of his triumphant High Museum of Art in Atlanta (arguably the most important public building completed in America in this decade). The preferential place traditionally granted large and official structures in the estimation of critics might tend to obscure the merits of this much smaller private project; historians are unlikely to accord it as significant a rank as Meier's landmark houses of the late sixties or his more recent large-scale projects. Still, it offers irrefutable evidence that his development as an artist is strong and steady, and that the magnitude of his commissions is no accurate index of their excellence.

This is a work of exceptionally high quality, and though at first sight it might appear to be more reiteration than origination (in that it is well within Meier's familiar Purist range), a closer look shows just how great this extraordinary architect's capacity for variations on a theme can be. He is the Mozart of late Modernism, working within a rigid formal system that nonetheless seems for him the perfect stimulus to invention.

Frank Giovannitti, a Pittsburgh businessman, bought a deep, narrow plot in an old estate section of the city, a property closely hemmed in on either side by large houses in traditional Colonial adaptations. Unusually well informed about contemporary architecture, he considered both James Stirling and Arthur Erickson as potential designers for his new house before finally settling on Meier, whose work he had admired for years in design publications.

Unfortunately, in order to raise money for the project (which proceeded in fits and starts with the fluctuation of the client's finances) Mr. Giovannitti sold the rear portion of the already small site, *(Text continued on page 214)*





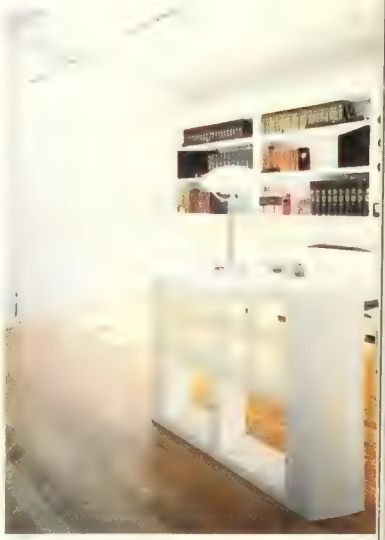
The only bedroom, *above,* opens onto a balcony at left, which overlooks the living room on the floor below. Cabinetry is covered in plastic laminate so finely detailed that it resembles lacquer.

Opposite: Though quite small, the house seems much larger as a result of Meier's graduated grid system, using modules of two, four, and eight feet as its basic compositional units.





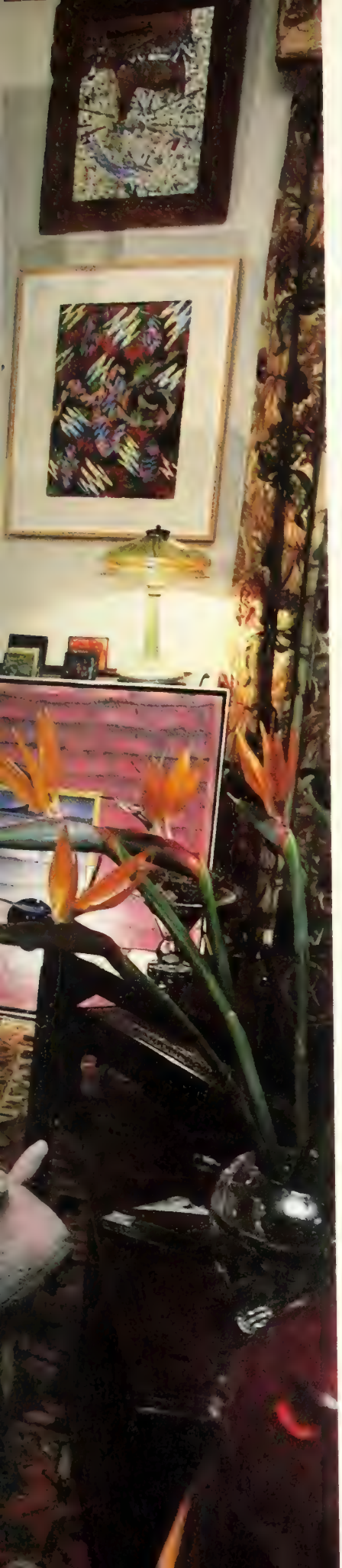
The living room, *opposite* and *above*, seems larger than its relatively modest dimensions because of its double-height ceiling and views out toward tall trees. It is sparely furnished with a Le Corbusier sofa and armchairs, a frequent Meier choice. On a built-in sideboard (above) is Christofle's reproduction of the S.S. *Normandie* tea service. The study on the balcony (opposite) is centered by Meier's handsome desk, *right*, designed for this house.





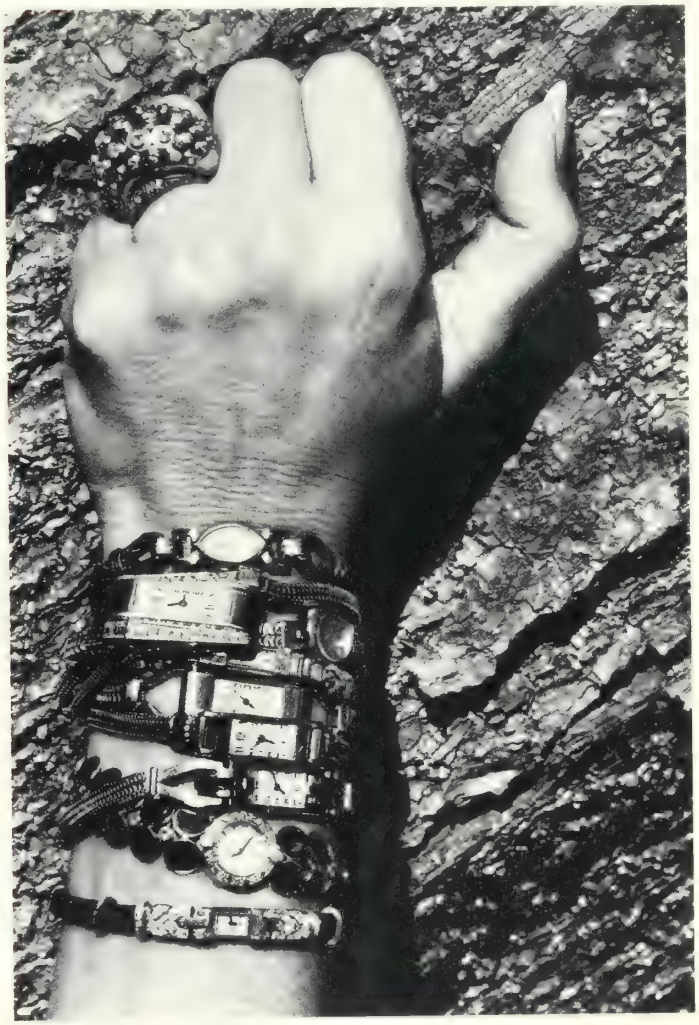






QUINN ESSENTIAL

In their California house, collectors Joan and Jack Quinn subscribe to the theory that — when it comes to art — there's never too much of a good thing



BY MARTIN FILLER

PORTRAITS BY HELMUT NEWTON

Joan Quinn, *left,* surveys her dense domestic landscape; at her feet recline her 17-year-old twins, Amanda (in bunny slippers) and Jennifer. Behind Mrs. Quinn, who is wearing a dress by her friend Zandra Rhodes, are three of the more than twenty portraits of her throughout the house. On the mantel and table at left are several examples from the Quinns' large collection of Victorian ornithological specimens. *Above:* Joan Quinn's forearm bedecked with nine of her vintage Cartier back-wind watches, which she wears en masse.





Joan Quinn in profile, *right*, as seen by Antonio. The color of her hair is not artistic license: she often dyes it in vivid hues, inspired by Zandra Rhodes. *Opposite:* Antony Donaldson's *Trapeze Artist* hovers above the entry hall. Directly below it is Tony Berlant's *Rock Man Canyon*, 1969. Ceiling clouds were painted by Joe Goode, blanket on balcony and wall sculpture behind it both by Charles Arnoldi. Stained glass lamp by Handel dates from the twenties.

On the exterior, their house looks much like the other unostentatious Spanish-style structures in one of the older sections of Los Angeles. There is no indication whatsoever that behind the beige stucco walls lurks one of the most astonishing interiors in Southern California, a region of our country not exactly unprepared for unusual concepts in domestic design. Similes somehow fail one here: Ali Baba's Cave seems rather too minimal, *Schatzkammer* not quite abundant enough, Cabinet of Curiosities too run-of-the-mill. What Jack and Joan Quinn have built is an environment that, like some rain forest of the fine and decorative arts, seems to have an atmosphere all its own, an aesthetic ecosystem in which the taste of its owners has attained a kind of elemental authority.

First, there is the art. As Jack Quinn accurately describes it, "Our collection—to put it immodestly—is one of the most definitive historical surveys of Southern California art that's ever been assembled anywhere, including museums. Billy Al Bengston, Ed Moses, Ed Ruscha, Joe Goode, Robert Graham, Ken Price—from the fifties, through the sixties and seventies, and right up to the eighties, you can walk through this house and within five minutes understand the development of those artists from their earliest work to their latest."

That is, if you're not seriously sidetracked by the decorative treasures that surround those paintings and sculptures like thick encrustations of marine life on a coral reef. Refulgent Tiffany tiles crowd Victorian repoussé silver soap caddies here, cut crystal perfume vials there. A sofa is heaped with brocade pillows discovered by the Quinns in the Peking Opera's warehouse, and in the corner is a lifesize painted balsa-wood banana tree that they brought back from Bali. Bizarre stuffed birds in bell jars stare at the trophies of bourgeois taste at its most secure: Steuben glass bowls, fine Oriental rugs, and lush, heavy fabrics that have been part of this house—built by Oliver Hardy of Laurel and Hardy fame—since long before the Quinns bought it in 1967.

Solidity and sensation, quality and a quantum leap of aesthetic faith give this remarkable house a sense of continuity not to be taken for granted in Los Angeles. As Jack Quinn explains, "The only way to live with the things you love is to continue to keep them around even when you run out of wall space, or as has happened here, floor space. When we bring something new into the house, nine times out of ten the first place we set it down is where it ends up."

Thus the Quinn house lacks the trendily edited feeling of many of today's art collectors' rooms, which can seem like market reports of what's in and what's out. The Quinns own works by artists whose reputations have peaked, by others who will never be esteemed by the art establishment as highly *(Text continued on page 200)*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HENRY BOWLES



In the richly cluttered living room, a collection of Victorian soap caddies and birds in bell jars; on the far wall, an untitled canvas by Ed Moses, 1972–73, under the shadow cast by Bryan Hunt's 1976 *Queen Crest*. *Opposite:* Fiberglass bustier by Issey Miyake and paint can by Joe Fay top a corrugated cardboard Rough Edges table by Frank Gehry, 1982. On table behind it, a Laddie John Dill sculpture (front left); a 1984 rock-mounted bronze by Antony Donaldson (top left).





The dining room, *right,* remains much as it was when the house belonged to comedian Oliver Hardy. Among the original features are the wrought-iron gates, Hepplewhite-style dining table, chairs, and sideboard, beige broadloom carpet, and the mirror surrounded by and reflecting painted wall decorations signed Robbie. Curtain fabric by Angelo Donghia is hung from Peking glass bracelets. Sideboard holds a row of Steuben glass bowls. On top of stuffed pheasants under glass, a lineup of ceramic works by Kenneth Price, 1959–80. At the center of the table is Robert Graham's 1978 *Lise Painted,* next to his 1979 *Torso Fragment.* To the left and right are wood maquettes by Woods Davy. Beneath the table, a Serebend rug. *Above:* Another Graham sculpture: his 1973–76 bronze, *Mirror Figure.*



HAYES ON THE HUDSON



Helen Hayes, *left,* next to a portrait of Queen Mary that she sent to the actress during the run of *Victoria Regina*. *Opposite:* Waterford crystal chandelier found in attic, and lithographs of Queen Victoria's ladies-in-waiting set tone in parlor.

For more than fifty years, Pretty Penny in Nyack has been home to the first lady of the American stage

BY JUDITH THURMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDGAR DE EVIA

The Hudson River is broad at the level of the town of Nyack, and green on both banks. This is the river of the great nineteenth-century landscapists: of Cole, Cropsey, and Church; and at the end of summer it lies motionless under the haze as under a light coat of varnish.

Helen Hayes speaks of the Hudson as "my" river and takes a deep maternal interest in its well-being. On her desk is a photograph of children swimming in water that only a few years ago was dangerously polluted; she will "brag shamelessly" about the return of the striped bass and the Atlantic sturgeon. The life of the river has run parallel to her own for the past 52 years, a symbol of both continuity and freedom.





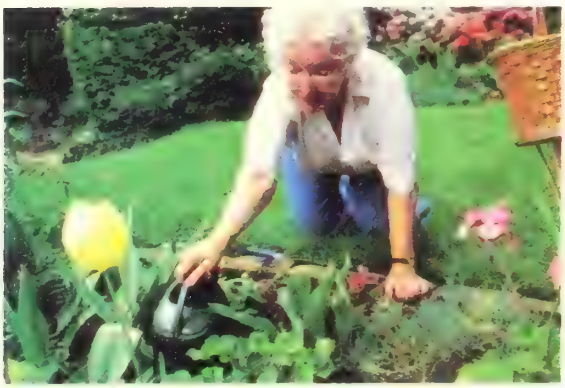
You look down to the river through the windows of Helen Hayes's big double drawing room. Her garden, beyond, slopes toward the water in cultivated stages. There is a porch, comfortably furnished, where the visitor is offered tea; then a swath of lawn shaded by an enormous maple and a very rare willow oak, whose crown has grown like a great coxcomb. A little below is a broad terrace of roses, unexpectedly formal—a sort of miniature villa garden. Most of the bushes are now "resting," says Helen Hayes, "gathering their forces for one last great effort." But her namesake rose, with its voluptuous peach and yellow flower, is wide awake. "It's the first to bloom, and it's somehow always still bearing when the others are giving out. Did you notice that it has no thorns?"

Helen Hayes smiles a little wryly at this fact, as if she regretted her rose's thornless state. There was a moment in her own life, during the twenties, when she felt the absence of a thorn or two as a deprivation. She was already a successful actress, but "I was nevertheless an over-protected, mother-smothered young thing. When my contemporaries were kicking up their heels and indulging in what was the longest celebration in history, I remained on my strict regimen of work and physical fitness." It was not until the age of 27, when she married the playwright Charles MacArthur and moved, four years later, to Nyack, that she had what she calls "my first blooming. In Nyack, I could feel a little racy."

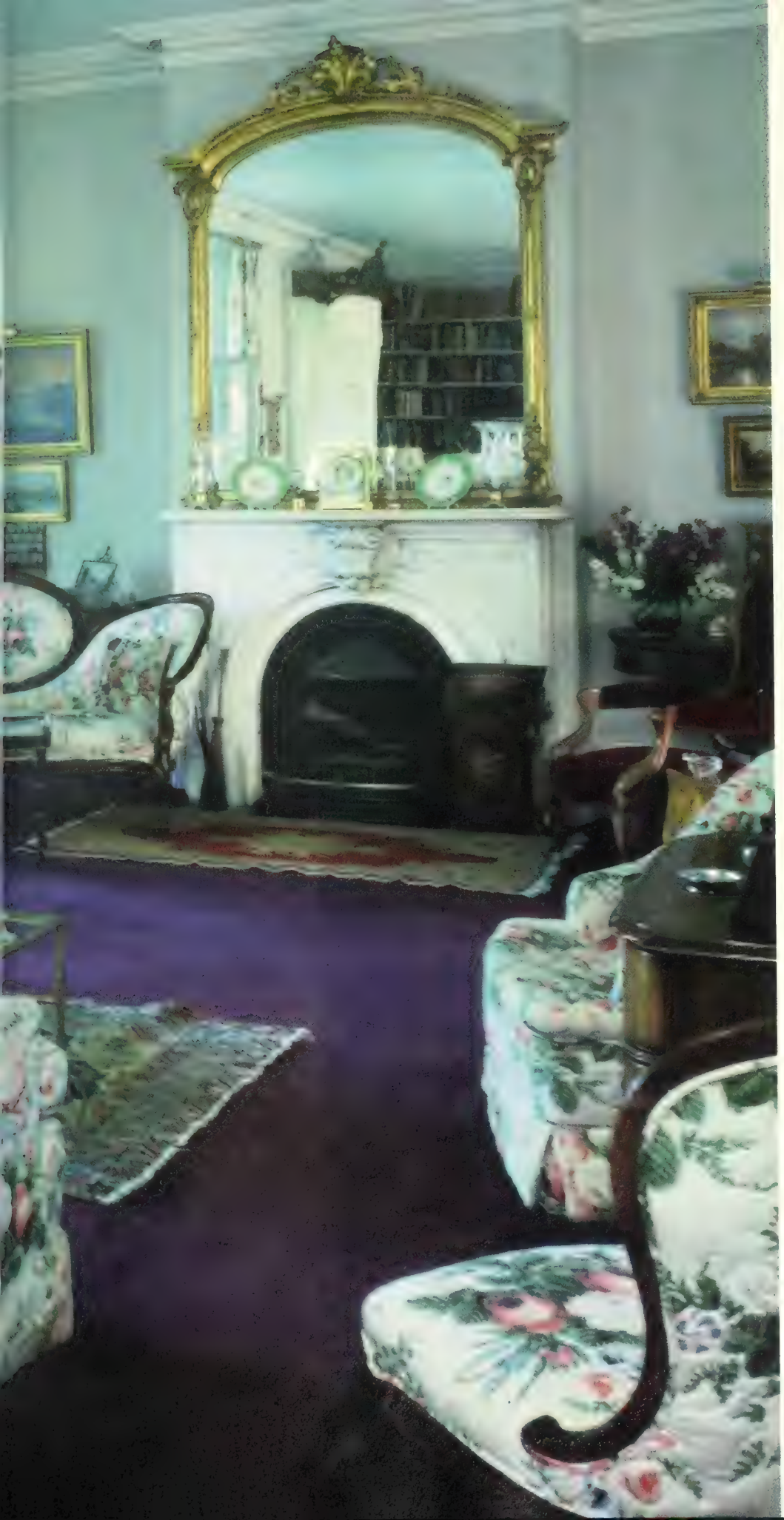
Nyack was the MacArthurs' "courting ground." They sailed west across the Hudson every weekend on the old Tarrytown ferry, which thoughtfully provided a trio of Italian musicians to serenade them. Disembarking, they would head for their favorite ice-cream parlor, and thus fueled, prowl the hilly streets looking for their "dream house." After a few disappointments and a little "trespassing," they found it, and Helen Hayes has lived in Pretty Penny ever since. "The pine tree has tripled in stature. My dogwoods are dying. The trees and I have grown old together. Rather melancholy, isn't it?" She says this with utter cheerfulness.

The spirited and ambitious young Helen Hayes, who felt stifled by her own goodness, might have played the heroine of Edith Wharton's 1929 novel, *Hudson River Bracketed*. Miss Hayes knew the book when she moved to Pretty Penny. What she didn't know was that she owned a fine example of a bracketed house. It was a foreigner—the English designer Rex Whistler—who enlightened her. Whistler had done the sets and costumes for one of

Among family pictures and awards,
opposite, in the basement room Helen Hayes refers
to as "Charlie's Domain," after her husband Charles MacArthur, is
lithograph of actress Mrs. Fiske, whom she admired.
Above: Part of garden planned fifty years ago by Mary Deputy
Lamson, with Helen Hayes's favorite roses including one named after her.
Below: Helen Hayes engaged in the chore of weeding.







In the light-filled living room, Hudson River landscapes hang on either side of the fireplace. The valances and mirror were in the house when Helen Hayes bought it; the flowered chintz is Bouquet from Kent-Bragaline.





In a corner of the bedroom, *opposite,* an American Empire table holds collection of blue opaline glass; chaise covered in Deborah Logan cotton from Brunschwig sits against bookshelves full of family pictures. *Above:* A photograph of Helen Hayes's daughter, Mary, sits on the window sill in the dressing room.

Miss Hayes's greatest theatrical successes, *Victoria Regina,* and was a connoisseur of the period's architectural whimsies. "Can you find me a Hudson River bracketed if I come to visit you?" he had asked Miss Hayes in London. "Of course," she replied, without knowing if or how she could comply. Whistler thought it exquisitely polite that she had arranged to live in one.

From their earliest days in the house, the MacArthurs set out to acquire the appropriate period furnishings for it. They bought several small paintings by artists of the Hudson River School, and a large number of engravings. Their collection of Victoriana was eventually so choice that they often loaned it to museums. "It was my husband who really knew Victoriana," said Miss Hayes. "He saw its charm even in the thirties, when really smart young couples were throwing out their parents' furniture and doing over their rooms in silver and white, à la Syrie Maugham." Perhaps his fondness for it also had something to do with the need for a counterweight—a rich, solid ballast of domestic happiness for a fast life lived in the public eye. "Charlie had a passion for authenticity. . . " Helen Hayes pauses a moment. "I've never been very good at decorating, but I know what makes me happy. A wonderful character in one of Sam Behrman's plays describes a room that has 'the mellowness of anachronism.' I like *that.*"

Mellowness is not a static relation to the past, and when Miss Hayes felt it was time for some changes in her décor, she turned to an old friend, the designer Laura Mako. Ms. Mako used lavish Victorian materials: gilt mirrors and plush carpets; lace curtains to the floor; old brocade wall coverings and an exuberance of floral chintz. She gave the rooms a richness of texture without, however, turning them into stage sets. There is a disarray of books and letters in the little green study that Helen Hayes calls "my torture room"—torture because her correspondence is so demanding. Mantels are laden with family photographs; *(Text continued on page 202)*



A portrait of Helen Hayes by Andrew Wyeth's sister, Henriette Wyeth, hangs in the upstairs hallway, *this page*. *Opposite:* Framing the door outside the basement room are Comedy and Tragedy reliefs purchased from the demolition site of the old Fifth Avenue Theatre.


TRAGEDY



PURE SPACE IN NEW DELHI

Pupul Jayakar's restored Lutyens bungalow

BY RASIK

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES



The collection of ancient Indian arts and crafts in the sitting room, *opposite,* reveals Pupul Jayakar's role as the great lady of Indian handcrafts. Near painted doors from Rajasthan a bullock-cart top and a platform provide seating. On the platform, embroidered pillows from Bihar, Gujarat, and Rajasthan, and a contemporary terra-cotta horse from Orissa. Dividing the room is a low table holding bronze lamp from the 15th century, a Gupta deer panel, and, in between, two small turbaned heads from the 1st century. *Above:* Pot-bellied Ganesh guards the front door.

Lutyens must have sweated under a pith helmet as he pondered on the planting of Jamun, Neem, and Peepul tree seedlings on an arid plain. Today, the romantically designed avenues of New Delhi—his magnum opus—converging on remnant monuments of a bygone era are flanked with a luxuriant growth of Indian trees. The English architect's memory of Constable's country and county homes, coupled with smattering impressions of the architectural ingenuity of the Mughals in coping with India's harsh climatic variation, resulted in the creation of a hybrid style: structures that could shelter an elegant and somewhat strategically distant "bungalow culture."

In this area of Delhi, set amid tree-lined avenues, nestled a few select residents destined to govern, sprawling lawns for pretty garden parties, and spacious bungalows for temporary residence. The bungalows themselves were therefore made as single units with distinct modular sizes and shapes allowing for very few extensions, other than an annex.

Mrs. Pupul Jayakar, daughter of a senior Indian civil servant, had grown up in an environment where the finer-





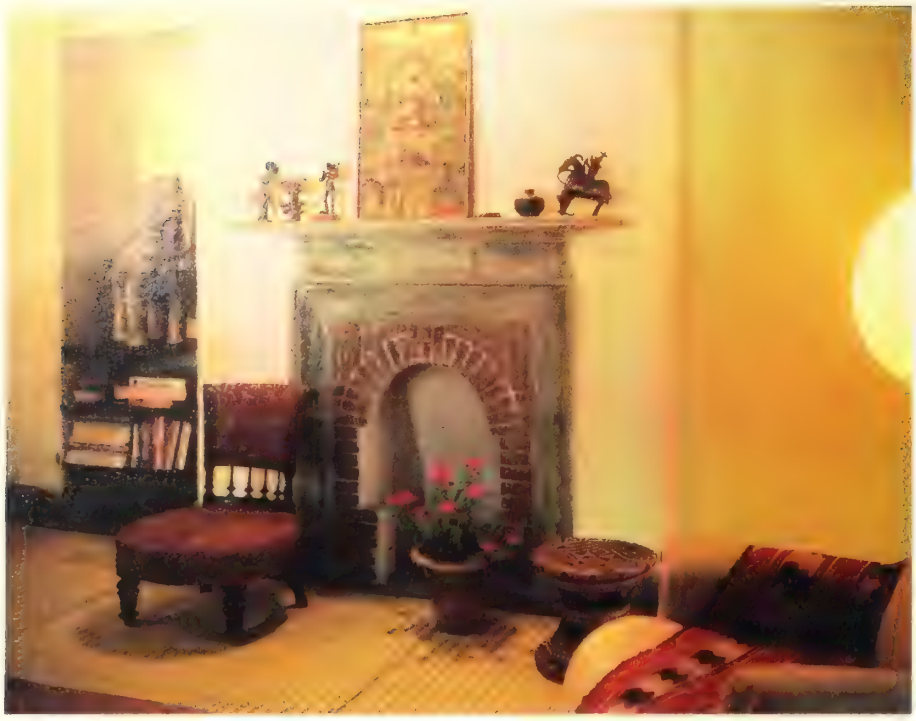
Contemporary Indian furniture inspired by the work of Lazarus is placed in the other half of the sitting room. Traditional satin-textured straw matting provides comfort for bare feet. On lacquered table rest a 5th-century female terra-cotta head and a 13th-century Buddha's hand poised in benediction.

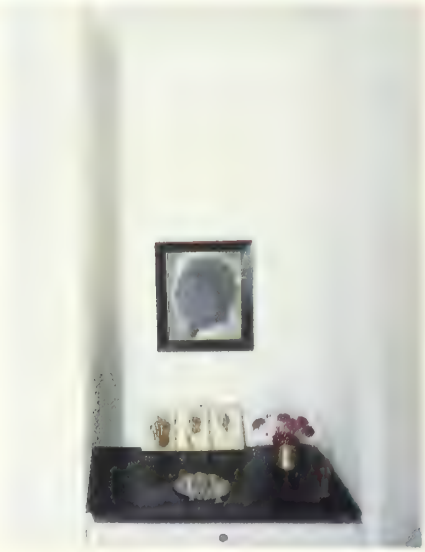


Over the *takhat* or sleeping platform in the bedroom hang two rubbings, the larger of Bodhidharma, the Indian teacher who took Buddhism to China



ı dining room, 15th-century carved brackets support shelf holding images of Adi Shakti, the first woman, and a Kolam, a magical white drawing





ies of the "bungalow culture" were quite naturally blended with the urge to remain essentially "Indian." Without pondering on the issues of convergence and nationalities, her life style today reflects a total need to do more with less. And do this she does, with such grace and finely honed senses that its very survival is a tribute to the manner in which she executes her responsibilities. Widely regarded as a mother of the revival of Indian handcrafts and handlooms—the appropriate usage of these skills became for Mrs. Jayakar a deeply personal statement.

Whether she sits in conversation with famous or aspiring scientists and philosophers or is holding a meeting with the numerous functionaries of the Festival of India in the U.S. (of which she is the chairperson and moving force), her house is her work space and her office. Her study can become a family room—even a place to eat and sleep. The large sitting room doubles as a conference chamber, room for intimate parties or a public discourse or even a dance recital.

Mobility of function, an agile sense of renewing the old and redefining space, mark the prerequisites for the interior plan. *(Text continued on page 204)*

A cloth *tanka* painting from Nepal hangs in the study, *top.* Stone mantel is home for Rajasthani horse and rider, dated 13th century; to the left, a four-armed Ganesh keeps peace between knife-wielding Earth Goddess and dancing figure. The low chair is an original Lazarus. In the alcove stands a majestic painted stucco horse and its headless warrior. *Above:* A quiet area and early photographs of Krishnamurti, seer and teacher. *Opposite:* Detail of an 18th-century Rajasthani religious cloth painting of Krishna and the Gopis dancing in the light of the full moon.







IN PRAISE OF PROSPERO

The very civilized country life of Sir John Gielgud

BY MOLLY KEANE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HENRY CLARKE



Sir John Gielgud, *opposite* (photographed by Melvyn Gill), actor and, when at home, gardener, here at ease with Augustus Caesar. *This page:* The main drawing room's high windows allow continual variations of light at all times of day. The room is dominated by a late-19th-century brass-and-cut-glass chandelier and is furnished with a cross section of 18th-century antiques—including Georges II and III and Louis XV and XVI.







Sir John oversaw the restoration of the gardens at the South Pavilion at Wotton Underwood, which were originally designed by George London in the late 17th century; *left,* the center parterre combines variegated privets and shrubs. *Above:* Moldings around the staircase and throughout the drawing room are painted in glittery gold and silver. The floor and stairs leading to the library/gallery were hand-painted by an artist friend. George III mahogany side chairs flank door leading to television room; Regency rosewood library table in foreground.



A careful look at the fireplace, *above,* shows the different shades of gray panels as well as a pair of Italian school still lifes, Solomon and Sheba from the school of Hendrik van Balen and five putti masks observing it all.

I find it impossible to disassociate John Gielgud the actor from John, the happy householder, for no one loves and cares for his house with more devotion and discrimination. So let me first write a little about the two houses where I have known him best—homes which do much to explain the man behind the actor.

Houses have always been a great importance to John. They are a part of his pleasure in living. And they are his retreats. Sixteen Cowley Street, Westminster, where he lived for many years, was an enchanting eighteenth-century house. It seemed to me to contain and express everything that was John. The small house was full of movement. One went up and down stairs, in and out, from room to different room, discovering treasure big or little. From the entrance hall, half dining room with its long table, by day bereft of dining panoply, a short stair led up to the drawing room, a room to live in, not a shadowed London drawing room. I think of yellow brocade and sunlight and a light-handed arrangement of precious things; his likings explicit in the small Dufy, a statue in a French square, a picture holding an entirety of light and air in its small space. Up another staircase—they are tall small houses on Cowley Street—to John's bedroom, a quiet, unemphasized place—a good place for sleeping. John is a good sleeper. Perhaps that is why he looks, at eighty, so agelessly calm.

Cowley Street, which seemed destined to be forever John's appropriate dwelling, is a ghost of other years—a happy, not a restless ghost as loved houses can be—because he left it willingly and adventurously when he found this wonderful South Pavilion of Wotton House, many miles from London in the heart of the countryside.

One might have thought Wotton rather a preposterous choice for a never-idle star actor of John's years. I think the long drives, early to London and the theater, and late to home, are welcome resting times, and furnish a necessary leisure. His South Pavilion (of which much more in this backwards vision which only grabs at memories) is a wing of one of the classical great houses belonging to the years when grateful countries built for their Marlboroughs. Then they added annexes for domestic offices in proportion and splendor—at least in their façades—equal to



The faces of homely children surround the door leading to the dining room, *right*. Left to right: two children with flowers attributed to Maria Verelst; 17th-century-style wall light with carved winged masks; and two children, the younger on a green cushion, attributed to George Knapton. In the foreground, Chinese sculpture of a woman riding a horse. Tucked under the small table is a marble bust of Napoleon in Roman dress, circa 1800. *Above:* The South Pavilion through the chestnut trees.





their splendid mansions. It is from such a grandiose background that John has originated a spacious simplicity. His house is warm as well as beautiful—though one dreads to imagine the oil bill. But, before I describe the present background, to which his happy age belongs, I want to tell as much as I can perceive about the John Gielgud I have known for fifty years—some trivial memories of the man within one of the greatest and most acclaimed actors of our time. I have neither the knowledge nor the words to write of his career in the theater with any proper degree of critical discernment.

I accept, although I cannot dissect, his genius. The genius which he has is a quality apart—we are ignorant of its genesis. In any case, genius is, nearly always, a misapplied word, a word presupposing a disembodied flight to Achievement while it is more of a twinge in the mind suggesting something unnamed, something no more than a trembling in outer air to be perceived and captured, held like a bird between the hands before it is worked over, in physical stress of mind and bodily exhaustion, until transmitted and presented in such a way that others may acknowledge and feel in touch with the finished creation, and think in our serious complacency: yes, of course we have always *known* that was Benedick or Hamlet, Prospero or Spooner.

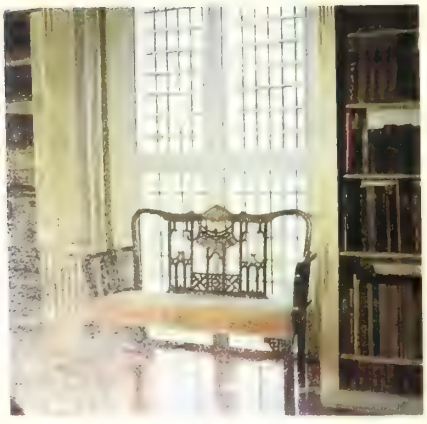
This gift and achievement is John's. The result would be there even if deprived of the dangerous magic of his voice, magic he discounts with typical carelessness: "I'm just lucky to *(Text continued on page 188)*



Damask curtains frame the dining-room windows, *left*. Both the Empire mahogany armchairs around the Regency breakfast table and the German satin sycamore chairs date from 1815 and recently were upholstered in Indian chintz. More 19th-century pieces include an octagonal Flemish mirror, giltwood console table with pink marble top, and sconces. *Above:* Flowers both real—freshly picked asters on a George I cabinet stand—and painted with fruit in a still life by Sir Matthew Smith.



Herbaceous borders surround the parterre, *right*. Beyond the pillars, informal plantings and the yew walk. *Above:* Sir John's bathroom is filled with accolades and theatrical paraphernalia including his 1981 best supporting actor Academy Award for *Arthur,* vintage posters, and *Evening Standard* Drama Awards. On the top shelf, a portrait of the actor as Hamlet in the late thirties. *Below:* A Chippendale-style settee in the book-lined gallery of the drawing room.







(Continued from page 185) have very good breath control."

The first play in which I saw John was *Richard of Bordeaux*—what a strange transportation for a moony girl from the Irish bogs—where the stuff of her life had only concerned the hunting field, the racecourses, or the price of a horse—to this evening when a sad enchantment was played out before her with an evanescent humor that brought tragedy closer to mind. The play had great skill and humor, and the young John played the young Richard with light-hearted heartbreaking truth. Then Pageants were ordinary little parties, friends were faithful, Death preposterous. The glamour of his looks was marvelously set on that evening in the Motleys' scenery and clothes. Those Motley girls were young then, and so clever with their telling simplicities, pale sets, and clothes that moved easily with the wearers' movements.

Our friendship began on that extraordinary evening because, after the last curtain call, my friend and I and another girl went round to his dressing room to offer embarrassing praises. He indulged our idiocies and accepted us, and that was not the end of the evening. We went on to some forgotten night club and ate and drank and danced. I still remember the slow fox trot, and the thought in my silly young mind: if *only* one of my Irish friends could see me now.

Part of the joy of that evening must have lain in John's warm response and acceptance of other people's talk; the stranger talk is to him, the longer it holds his interest. In the same way that he is an attentive listener he can consider a script, finding the meaning in the lines, concentrating on the punctuation that leads into the meaning.

When talking with his friends he himself has a fearless and agile use of words, irreverent and wonderfully entertaining. There is an ice-clear memory, and a wit accurate as a dagger thrust, but without any small, spiteful comment to twist in a possible wound. His self-appraisal goes far beyond modesty, because it is so very funny—asked not long ago in a fascinating interview with Russell Harty which of his



In the gallery, some of Sir John's books and photographs of friends.

roles he thought his greatest, he answered without an instant's consideration: "Oh, I think I'm best at prigs and bores."

It was three years after that evening with Richard of Bordeaux that I went to stay with him at Foulslough, his cottage near Finchingfield. Foulslough was an enchanting house, full of the bleached furniture and blue bed linen of the day, and happiness. It had its apple orchard too.

I had written, with my great friend John Perry, a play. It was a little comedy on how the fox-hunting Irish live in their old, cold houses—and John had committed himself to reading it. I shudder now at my embarrassing insistence on sitting with him—avid for his opinion—while he read. I can still feel my soaring relief at his laughter and then the exciting flash of his quick criticism and constructive suggestion.

"Couldn't you give the old aunt something naughty to do? Perhaps she's keen on racing?" That was the spark which lighted the way toward Margaret Rutherford's wonderful performance as my own dotty Aunt Bijou in a successful little play called *Spring Meeting* in which nobody except John and its authors had very much faith before it opened.

I have a distinct memory of his direction of Margaret Rutherford in *Spring Meeting*. It was her first long comedy part—years before the wonderful Madame Arcati and Miss Marple qualities grew into her great reputation. In her first playing of Miss Bijou she was a little inclined to lean toward the madness and sadness in the character. I saw John lift her performance by a word, a suggestion until it became airborne—there was something from the wild a tinge of terror conveyed in the naughty-child-found-out and the Grand Dame making a dignified way through her faintly disreputable eccentricities.

His perception of true quality such as hers is immense, a flight of mind. Once he said of Fred Astaire: "Oh, he's *such* a good actor. He could play Hamlet." That he should have so complete an understanding of the fun and the pathos in an Irish life entirely foreign to himself is not really strange when one remembers that he once spoke of acting Chekhov as "being part of a novel, a family, something very intimate." The warmth and industrious insight in his direction of that great author is equally employed in his direction of the work of lesser writers.

When discussing my work with him I have never felt impotent to set my meaning free, his response is so rapid, although it may be in contradiction to my view of the character or situation in question—all angles are there to be construed, accepted, set aside, reaccepted: "Wouldn't it be funnier (or sadder, or more menacing) like this? We'll try it anyway."

I can well remember—though it is a trivial incident in a nonserious little play—a day when rehearsals were not ending too happily, when I was faced with the numbing demand: "Could we have a funny line *here* tomorrow morning?" A merciless finger on the script.

An evening of tortuous mental obstruction for me followed until, at last, I found it. Very good I thought it was, too, as I produced it with smug confidence the next morning and waited for his laugh and commendation.

"Is this the funny line?" A pause while he read it. A further pause, then: "*Not* very funny, is it, darling?" Unnecessarily unkind, I thought then. Right, I know now. His mind was with the play, not with my susceptibilities.

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perfect, but changeless. It is in John's sometimes ruthless direction, or perhaps in his supposition that his own perception of the facets of a situation or the shades of a character can be immediately shared with others (the ordinary, who are without his fecundity of imagination), that he can be in difficulty and the actor or writer, left in painful, if respectful, puzzlement.

Perhaps it is his nonacceptance of the black and white in life or in the theater that lets in a new light on obscurities—through his direction relationships fall apart, to come together on a fresh footing and understanding—like morning in a woodland, distances are newly apparent. Characters walk and talk through the distances he has seen. They breathe freely in the new air of life he has given to the written word. This, as a writer, is my experience of working with him.

When John talks about the theater, its past is as clear and living to him (and to us) as its present. He can speak about his great-aunt Ellen Terry as realistically as though she were still alive, and waiting to read a rave or a disparaging notice the next morning. Some of his evocations of her performances are very close to his own charismatic work. He writes of her: "She moved with extraordinary spontaneity—you really believed she was walking on the flagstones of Venice or the fields of Windsor." I find the same quality in his own physical movements as they twine in with, or follow, his speaking voice: the despairing hesitations of Ivanov. Beyond the pleasant, slightly apologetic tone of voice, the menace in his playing of Spooner in Pinter's *No Man's Land* is terrifying. Menace is conveyed through the too-obvious ease of his posture, relaxed, knees crossed, sandaled foot swinging, but the hands are clasped, thumballs pressed together, holding back, till a fitter moment, the power to destroy.

He must be the least self-centered and most observant actor living. He talks marvelously about other players. His memory is totally accurate, and his descriptions dispassionate and wildly funny. A life style is conveyed in a very few words. For instance, speaking of the private life of a successful actress, "...when not acting she preferred to stay at home and play bridge with her servants." He has the right word in which to praise in greater or lesser measure.

He has talked and written copiously about the great actors he has known and worked with, or the lesser actors who have interested him, but there is far too little about himself. Listening to him, or reading his books, one is cheated when his greatest successes are passed over, almost as accidents, while he gives unhesitant condemnation to some of his own performances or productions: "...it was a Great Failure." Full stop. Disaster, if it happens, is accepted as his entire responsibility. If any wish concerning the future of his own career is evident, perhaps it is the hope that a film should be made of *The Tempest,* and in it he should play his truest Prospero.

John's home, the South Pavilion, was once the coach and carriage house, part of the stable wing of Wotton. It still contains the quietness of those days of sheeted carriages and broughams and phaetons. When one comes into the vast drawing room one's first impression is of light and flowers, dogs and a big fire, before the beauty of the room dawns through its comforts, and one realizes it is the proper, almost poetic environment for him. Beauty belongs to the room's stature, to its color and right arrangement. There is nothing arrogantly splendid or anything of great ostentatious value; John parted with many of his priceless antiques and pictures when he left Cowley Street. At its far end the room is shortened for a space taken by a little gallery lined by bookshelves, crammed with books. Underneath the gallery there is a comfortable cave: a place for dog's baskets, television, the newspapers, the telephone—all the day-after-day commitments of life.

Although the great saloon and the dining room are both on the grand scale there is nothing of the *palazzo* about them. A warmth possesses and envelops the possible stateliness of the air; pictures are subdued in it, they share in what goes on. Any grandeur is contradicted by a lucid feeling of busy domesticity. This is particularly true of the dining room. One is most happily aware of food: wonderful. And wine: still more wonderful. More often than not there is evidence of some acute and charming thought—a tiny Easter-egg kind of present—not to be eaten then, but to be carried home by the lucky guest. My last Easter egg was as full of caviar (large and gray) as a hen's egg is full of meat.

Then there is the garden, acres of sunny garden, with the stretching gray wings of the house spread behind it. There is an extended direct formality in this garden; formality that accepts a vista, a temple. It has the stateliness of a ghost pavane before its distances are dissolved into woodlands and long meadows.

Walking through this house and out into its garden one is filled with the happy thought that here Prospero has found his absolute and proper dwelling place; not a cloud-capped tower, or any gorgeous extravaganza of foreign palaces, but an English house. Wotton has withstood time and carried its qualities of beauty and usefulness into our present. There is nothing common here, or mean. John fits very well indeed into the picture. □

Editor: Babs Simpson

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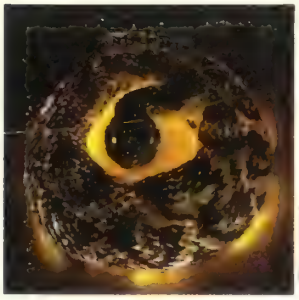
JOURNAL

TIPPING THE SCALES

Frank Gehry: Unique Lamps, Metro Pictures, New York, through Dec. 22.

In the eighteen months since the first Fish Lamp was unveiled by the Formica Corporation to promote its ColorCore plastic laminate, architect Frank Gehry's translucent sculptures have quickly become something of an avant-garde status symbol, avidly snapped up by collectors from Philip Johnson to Michael Jackson. Now the manufacture of these effigies (carried out in the New City Editions "Fish Factory" in Venice, Calif.) has expanded to include reptilians as well, with "scales" of ColorCore, chipped by hand used as the basic surface unit.

An architect who most closely parallels the interests of the artists with whom he often collaborates (he and Claes Oldenburg worked on a project for this year's Venice Biennale), Gehry in these pieces goes far beyond the decorative designs of his architectural colleagues. His fish and snakes have a life of their own. *Martin Filler*





BORIS GOOD ENOUGH

Boris Anisfeld in St. Petersburg 1901–1917, Shepherd Gallery, New York, through Dec. 31.

The names Diaghilev and Bakst recall an intensely creative period for Russia's prerevolutionary avant-garde. Other artists active in a group led by Diaghilev, *Mir Iskusstva* (World of Art), are less known—Boris Anisfeld (1879–1973) among them.

Besides designing sets for theatrical productions, including many for the Theatre Ballet Russe, he painted works such as *Bathers, Evening on the River Dvina* (1905), *right,* filled with vibrant planes of color overlaid with almost overpowering natural motifs. Most of Anisfeld's early work hasn't been seen since an exhibition tour in 1918 when he immigrated to the U.S. Now fifty of these canvases offer stunning testimony to his skills. *Anne Rieselbach*



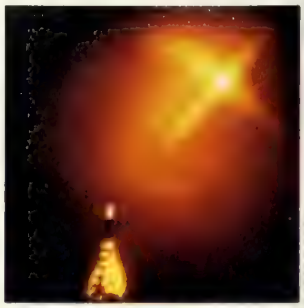
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Building Portraits, Manhattan Borough President's Office, Municipal Building, New York, through Dec. 31.



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(Continued from page 155) as they are by Jack and Joan, and still more by those whom they backed well before they rose to the prominence they now enjoy. Ultimately, it matters little to the Quinns into which of those categories their artworks fall.

That attitude, of course, has been bred by the confidence that comes from having done so well on the whole. For so much of what the Quinns own is of such seminal importance that it would be impossible to think of retrospectives of their most extensively represented artists without major loans from their trailblazing collection. The Quinns are thus a source of envy and bafflement to many aspiring collectors in the Los Angeles area, where Jack and Joan command an almost magnetic field of influence. But as Mrs. Quinn recounts it, the process of amassing their collection wasn't all that difficult. "We usually bought things that other people didn't want," she says matter-of-factly. "In most cases, we knew it was good because we've been able to see a different kind of beauty in things. We've always pushed ourselves to go beyond the ordinary, to be in the avant-garde, and most important, not to be afraid of things that might rub some people the wrong way."

Certainly their timing was right. The years just after their marriage in 1961 were a time of immense creativity for the visual arts in Southern California, with John Altoon, Larry Bell, Billy Al Bengston, Ron Davis, Joe Goode, Robert Graham, Ed Moses, Ken Price, and Ed Ruscha, among others, challenging the hegemony that the New York School had maintained for the preceding twenty years. Taken by the free, open spirit of that new work, the Quinns became collectors, then patrons, and finally confidantes of many of those artists. With their genuine gift for friendship and open admiration for the creative temperament, Joan and Jack soon became very special participants in the emerging avant-garde art world of L.A.

Joan Agajanian Quinn's mother had [illegible] entional oil portrait of her daughter painted when she graduated from high school, and that obscure art-



Jack Quinn photographed in his study by Helmut Newton. Behind him are two canvases by Ed Ruscha from the early sixties; to the right is a corrugated cardboard Easy Edges chair by Frank Gehry, 1972.

ist is likely to be remembered after all because his was the first of some 25 portraits of Joan that now form one of the most recurrent themes of the collection. By California artists as various in their styles as Mel Ramos and Don Bachardy, those portraits as a group seem uncommonly communicative, no doubt because the painters and the sitter have generally known each other so well. The large number of likenesses that she has had made of herself is not necessarily to be seen as a sign of vanity: the more one knows Joan Quinn the more one recognizes that this serial approach is the only way likely to approximate the diverse aspects of her vivid personality.

Joan's physical presentation is of a piece with her artistic philosophy. She has devised an image for herself that simultaneously maximizes her great personal warmth and sets her apart as a supremely self-assured woman not at all concerned with conformity or the expected. In addition to her commitment to the arts (she is a member of the California Arts Council, a founder of the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, and a sometime exhibition curator) she is also passionate about fashion (on which she has frequently lectured).

Joan Quinn is most often dressed in designs by her friends Zandra Rhodes and Issey Miyake. Occasionally, she will wear pieces by both in quite startling conjunctions of hand-painted, pearl-embroidered chiffon and rough Japanese homespun. Her hair streaked with peacock blue or kelly green, her fingers, forearms, and full bosom aglitter with multiple selections from her large collection of jewelry both serious and fake, Joan Quinn standardly attracts stares for her freewheeling abandon. But make no mistake: Joan Quinn is no mere clotheshorse; a serious student of the couturier's craft, it was she who brought Miyake's stunning "Bodyworks" show to the U.S. last year. And it should also be noted that her clothes enjoy the longevity of her art and objects. She will wear a favorite design for years, and is no more likely to deaccession a dress than a painting. ("We've never bought for investment, trade, or resale," insists Jack Quinn. "We have never, ever, in the past 25 years sold anything we've collected.")

Though the charismatic—even theatrical—persona Joan has invented for herself tends to dominate the surface of proceedings in which both she and her husband take part, there is no question that his complementary constancy and practicality make them one of the most impressively matched teams in art collecting on either coast. Jack Quinn, an attorney who was the youngest president of the Los Angeles County Bar Association (and who represents almost all of the artists whose work he collects), looks upon his supporting role with an admixture of pride and conspiratorial glee. "Joan has a marvelous eye and incredible taste. When you walk into an artist's studio with her, she'll immediately say, 'I like this, this, and this.' Then the artist will ask me, 'Which one did Joan like?' and when I tell him he'll say, 'Oh, no, she always does this to me.' "

However, those artists have the satisfaction of knowing that those pieces will be joining the most distinguished previous examples of their own work, for long ago the Quinns opted for depth rather than breadth. When they first started out, the big California collecting money was still going for the Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, and Fauves that have been popular among the movie moguls since the thirties. Today, some L.A. collectors still shun their leading local lights as being too "provincial," favoring New York–based artists instead. But Jack and Joan have never changed their tune. Their

ollection has something money can't buy: conviction. Whatever the rank ultimately accorded the Southern California School, it seems certain that the Quinns' role as collectors of it will take on a legendary aura.

But meanwhile, we should think of them in their house in the early evening, just before they are about to go out to one of the dozens of gallery openings they attend each season. The living room, in that most outdoor-oriented part of the country, is uncompromisingly interior. Heavy brocade curtains screen what is left of the fading daylight, and the general atmosphere is much more *Sunset Boulevard* than *77 Sunset Strip*. A profusion of potted plants—amaryllis, orchids left in their pink and yellow cellophane wrappers—along with bird-of-paradise flowers in vases and an aviary's worth of taxidermy give the space the eerie air of a jungle. One must pick one's path very carefully through this thicket of objects rich and strange, but any apprehensions are put to rest by the cultivators of this luxuriant and exotic landscape.

"All this self-indulgence is strictly for our own edification and enjoyment," says Jack, and when you see them amid the intriguing evidence of their quarter-century obsession with the arts, you can immediately sense the pleasure that it gives them. The Quinns are perfect examples of the difference between consumption and creation: they've chosen the latter, and thereby have become artists of a sort in their own right. Their medium has been themselves. □ *Editor: Joyce MacRae*



In Jack Quinn's study, a table by Billy Al Bengston is obscured under piles of books.

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(Continued from page 167) souvenirs and memorabilia have been integrated gracefully with valuable antiques. Nowhere does the house's sense of history feel pedantic or its charm cloying. Helen Hayes is particularly appreciative of this achievement—first, because she is a great actress who abhors an empty gesture; and second, because she is a woman of great naturalness who finds "nothing more exhausting or troubling than a room 'in perfect taste,' with everything 'just so,' and no allowance made for the unruliness of real life."

Helen Hayes was married to a man with a fine feeling for the unruliness of



Pretty Penny by Edward Hopper, 1939

real life, and Charles MacArthur made high comedy of it. He also sometimes felt the need to escape from his own precious Victoriana, and for this purpose he built a "barroom" in his basement. At the entrance are two carved panels rescued from the demolition site of the Fifth Avenue Theatre: comedy and tragedy. They are fitting brackets for a room that has the feel of a rather seedy pub frequented by hard-bitten newspapermen. There is an elaborate mahogany bar; wicker chairs covered in the MacArthur tartan; an enormous dinosaur of a console television; and a row of red plush seats—numbers 112–114—from the Helen Hayes Theatre, torn down amid howls of community protest to make room for the Marriot Marquis Hotel. On the walls are the photographs of "a few friends": the Lunts, John Gielgud, Noel Coward, Harpo Marx, Fred Astaire, Ruth Gordon, Katharine Hepburn, Lillian Gish, John Drew, and several dozen other great figures in modern theater. "A funny collection of oddballs," says Helen Hayes.

Her Nyack neighbors thought so. Nyack before the Second World War was a rich, sedate, and terribly "small-minded" town that "hated" the arrival of these boisterous and no doubt wicked theater people. When the MacArthurs began to dig a swimming pool at the foot of their garden, the postman commented—his awe mixed with great unease—that "Hollywood had come to the Hudson." Miss Hayes couldn't have been more delighted. It gave her that "racy" feeling. "What wonderful bodies have flung themselves into that pool!" Katharine Hepburn liked to practice her jackknife in a brassiere and shorts, and John Barrymore once chilled the water with a truckload of ice to cure a particularly savage hangover. "I felt," he told his hostess, "just like the fly in a highball."

Throughout her career, Helen Hayes would always drive home to Nyack from Manhattan after her performances, and during the war years, when gas was rationed, she took the bus. Having to catch it gave her "an alibi" for declining late-night revels. She managed to keep a high-powered career in balance with an unusually happy domestic life: her marriage and her two children—Mary and James, who both became actors. But in 1949, Mary, who was then nineteen, died of polio; her father, who never fully recovered from that loss, died seven

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HAYES ON THE HUDSON

years later. At that point, Helen Hayes decided to move into the city—into an apartment—ceding, in part, to the pressure of well-meaning friends. " 'Leave the past behind you,' they told me—as if one ever can." But she listened to them, put her furnishings up for auction, and arranged to sell Pretty Penny to old friends: Herbert Ross and Nora Kaye. "It was very fortunate," Miss Hayes continues, "that Nora panicked at the last minute. She had never lived in anything bigger than a trunk and the size of the house scared her. How providential that was for me. What would I have done in the city—meet friends for lunch? Window-shop? This house has always given me so much—and so much to do."

In 1972, Helen Hayes retired from theater. She had literally become allergic to it—the dust in its boards and its backstages. She had also been "in a harness" since the age of five, and "I quite simply had begun to run amok!" Liberated from the inexorable routine of and commitment to eight performances a week, Helen Hayes has "jumped aboard a horse and run off in all directions."At the age of 84, she has become an insatiable traveler; she remains actively engaged in raising funds for and directing a number of charities—as vice-president of The Actors' Fund, co-chairman along with Lady Bird Johnson of the National Wildflower Research Center, and as a member of the board of the Helen Hayes Hospital in Haverstraw.

It is, by now, a cliché to remark how gracefully Helen Hayes wears her age, how vital and involved with the world she is. As a spokesperson for her generation, she has just published a book, *Our Best Years,* based on Mutual of Omaha's radio program of the same name. Her secret, I suspect, is that she doesn't think of herself as particularly noble or heroic for growing old—for "somehow still bearing when the others have given out." She puts it simply: "I'm just *greedy.*" □ *Editor: Jacqueline Gonnet*

PURE SPACE IN NEW DELHI

(Continued from page 176) Fresh flower pots four feet high, brought inside from the garden one day; an object loaned to a museum or shifted, or even sent out, literally, on the lawns to breathe. All this necessitates the use of the barest of immobile or heavy structures. Like a high priest in a Hindu temple who bathes, anoints, and clothes his deities, relocating their position as if they were his children or aged parents, making seasonal offerings of flowers, fruits, and backdrops, Mrs. Jayakar too is constantly conducting her little "play" with her self-taught sense of design. Although she has pioneered the cause of formal design training and has been instrumental in the setting up of major institutional frameworks to support the growth of design awareness, her designer friends would consider that she herself remains the best university to train with.

With the task of creating a living space within the aging walls of the bungalow allotted to her in 1981 by the government, Mrs. Jayakar [illegible] with a few friends who were as eager as she to see it [illegible] way. "Her way," to be precise, is an undelineated way, where as one goes along, beauty close-

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The Continuing Adventure: Chapter 2

It was a white Christmas in Paris...



Some years ago, a couple we know were in Paris over the holidays.

They celebrated Christmas dinner in a bistro off St. Michel. The husband, inspired by love and champagne, told the waiter to add the wine bucket to the bill. The waiter drew himself up and replied, in both French and English, that it was not for sale.

The same bucket, with various labels attached, kept showing up in restaurant after restaurant, as if to remind the husband that he could not give his wife the world.

Imagine our friend's delight when, recently, he happened to spot the selfsame bucket in a Pier 1 window. He took it home and proved himself a hero at last.

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sideboard at left) is the standard item that one sees in restaurants all over France, licensed to bear the labels of Charles Heidsieck, Ch. Cardier, Monmousseau and other illustrious champagnes. It took us many months of negotiating to persuade all the necessary officials to let us bring it, for the first time, to America.

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Painted doors from Rajasthan

ly follows function. This means putting aside notions of all standard norms on forms. Fixtures, objects, furniture, textures, styles would coalesce in their common pursuance of excellence. And, therefore, a virile terra-cotta horse, made on the humble wheel of a tribal potter in Orissa, can converse on the same platform with one made ornately in Rajasthan to pull a temple chariot. A tussah-upholstered very easy chair (salvaged from a Maharajah's junkyard) can rest on tightly woven grass mats that run from wall to wall across the floors.

Lazarus, a turn-of-the-century European furniture manufacturer working from Indian inspirations, created furniture that could look only Indian, yet allow for Western-style comfort. Unlike Bugatti's opulent celebration of Middle Eastern skills—this furniture was not too concerned with ornamentation and eccentric form and could hence easily be placed as a little accent in the sitting room with otherwise anonymous walls and floors. Highlights in the choicest art objects Mrs. Jayakar has collected reveal her involvement with the arts over fifty years.

Whether it be the fifth-century head of the Buddha bought with a one-dollar birthday allowance when she was eleven, or the Thai hand of the sage spotted and picked up from a pile at a Cost Plus store in San Francisco, all of Mrs. Jayakar's acquisitions immediately strike a silent rapport with her. "If you really love an object, it grows and grows in its beauty. And this feeling for age . . . as say in the song of a bard or the curve of a pot . . . time could *never* diminish this depth"—she continues. "I have never been able to replicate, imitate, or try to capture the essence of another age."

The qualities of energy and of compassion are the two themes that attract her the most. Like two arms that guide her reach, she chooses on one hand images of the mother goddesses, the sun in a silver ring, the elliptical stone lingas—potent with premordial energy—while on the other a hand in *vitarka mudra* announces the presence of smiling stucco and terra-cotta heads of Maitriya and Bodhisatva, a classic stone sculpture of agile deer listening to the sermon of the sage.

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PURE SPACE IN NEW DELHI

The bungalows of Lutyens were designed with high-roofed chambers and vaulted ceilings that would allow hot air to rise and pass through little windows near the roof—*roshandaans* (literally—the containers of light). Fresh air would be drawn in through the doors and windows, opening on latticed verandas that often circumambulate the house as a much-needed buffer between the inside and the outside. Mrs. Jayakar's bungalow, however, had unfortunately been lived in many times before by people who did not think twice before converting verandas into cramped rooms with false ceilings and who cherished an odd passion for partitions and colored walls. Stone-and-brick fireplaces had been painted with enamel and covered with layers of whitewash, a bit like what quite a few of us seem to be doing to ourselves!

For today, when plastic-covered couches, velvet curtains, and carpeted floors are hallmarks of status, Mrs. Jayakar's self-imposed constraint on cost makes for an alternative that is more than aesthetic.

Contemporary Indian architecture, making forced statements with concrete, is covered with bougainvillea. Landscapists in doubt put a plant here and a pot there to use up the space. Mrs. Jayakar, instead, plants to walk into clusters for a healing bath. "I plant to converse with the flower and the sap as it rises to the leaf heals me."

The lawn surrounding the house is divided and treated as adjunct to the rooms opening directly on it. The sitting room opens on a patio, with cane chairs and a boundary defined by grass slopes merging with bushes that form the end of the compound. On one end, oleanders, jasmines, and franjipani in a dense and random planting are intended to soon cover the ground with billowing foliage, cascading one on the top of another as in the hill-painting miniatures of India.

The ground wherever it opens will become the pathways through this foliage and will lead to flower beds and votive terra cottas under trees.

Already, birds and squirrels come as close to the house as do the plants; and when the trees grow higher, the sun will probably filter through their unregimented canopy in a way that would have perhaps made Lutyens sweat less! □

Editor: Babs Simpson



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(Continued from page 144) on which the purchaser built a by-no-means-memorable house designed by Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown. Meier has never had to deal with so restricted a situation, but he approached it with a combination of accommodation and obliviousness, just what was required to resolve the confrontation.

From the street, the Giovannitti house is obviously different from its red-brick neighbors, but its discreet feeling of containment saves it from looking like an alien intruder dropped into these thoroughly genteel surroundings. On the street level, only the two upper stories are visible: the third and lowest floor is at the bottom of the steeply sloping site.

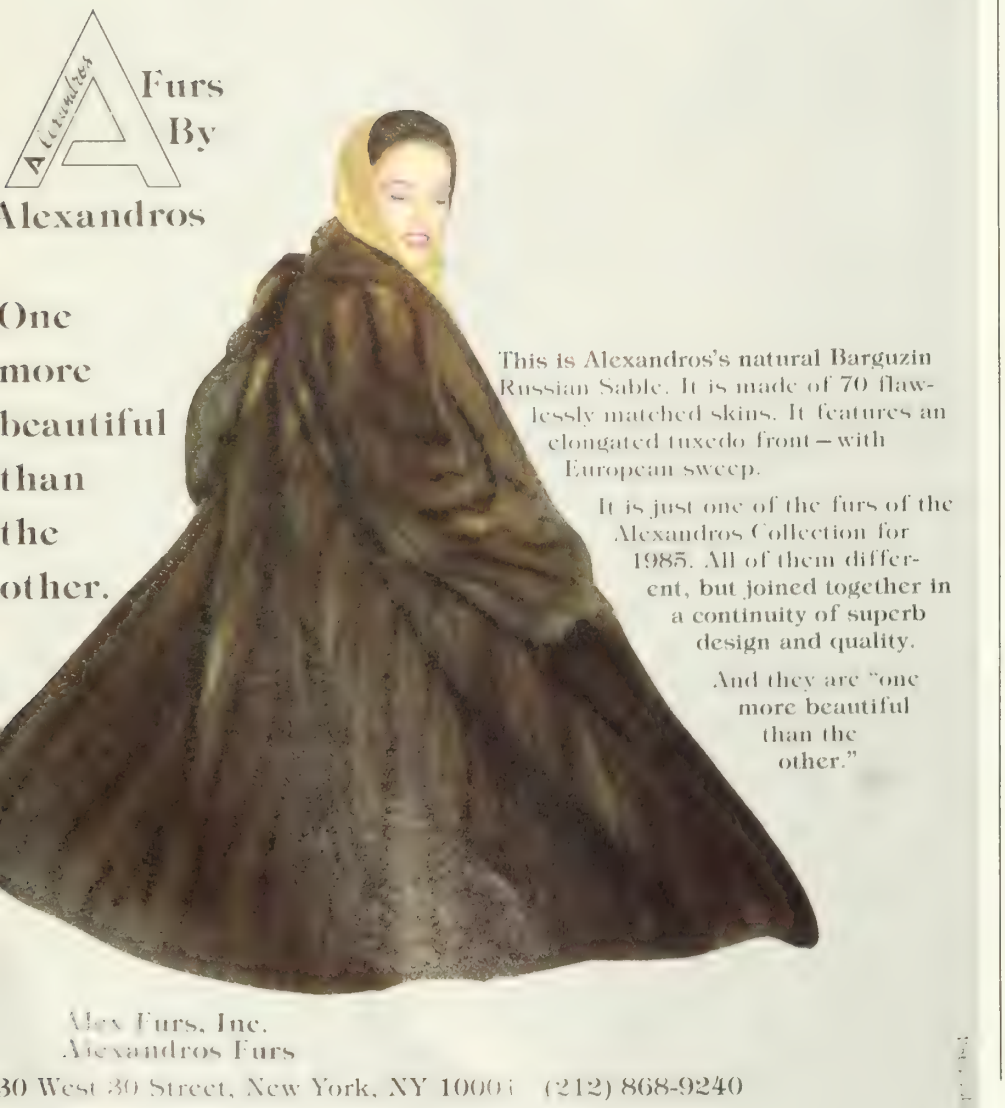
On the middle level, one enters a vestibule that leads into the double-height living room, a dramatic space that looks out onto the magnificent large trees that almost completely obscure the adjacent structures. A stairway upward goes to a bedroom and a study, both of which open onto balconies overlooking the living room, which in turn has a balcony opening onto the dining room on the story below (which also has a kitchen and a small sitting room).

That is all, but it is more than enough. With less than 2,400 square feet (including the garage), the Giovannitti house is considerably smaller than residences customarily designed by high-style architects well into their careers, since the small private house is most often the province of the younger architect and the less-than-plutocratic client. This scheme, however, is a welcome demonstration of a first-rate talent applied to a commission in which the power of concentration—both in the sense of thoughtfulness as well as reduction—is revealed as it rarely is in contemporary architecture. It seems to be the nature of architects to want to build as largely and lavishly as possible, but the Giovannitti house is convincing proof that considering the opposite might be equally rewarding.

Although the Giovannitti house has a very attractive modesty, it is so exquisitely executed (under the supervision of Meier's project architect, Michael Palladino) that one wouldn't guess that it cost its owner, who also acted as general contractor, a figure so low that it borders on the unbelievable. But that factor diverts our attention from what is really distinguished about this house: its strong sculptural presence, which has all the economy, inevitability, and strength of a mineral formation. Meier describes it as "an eroded cube," in which segments and even whole quadrants have been pulled away from the core and shifted up or down.

The architect's rhythmic handling of the glazed surfaces of the house—windows in modular variations of two, four, and eight feet square, as well as infill of glass block—is echoed in the square porcelain-steel paneling that has become one of his favorite cladding materials. Other portions of the exterior are covered in stucco or a handsome matte-gray tile; Meier's judicious use of each allows us to pick up his formal interrelationships with an ease that makes us appreciate the clarity of his thinking.

Still, as cerebral an exercise as this seems in the faceted perfection of its surfaces, here is a building that will hold our attention long after the houses of Meier's imitators come to look like vacuous approximations of the real thing. There is not an extraneous gesture nor a wasted movement in the Giovannitti house, and though it is small in size, it is large in its significance as the latest documentation of one of our most valuable architectural talents. □ *By Martin Filler. Editor: Elizabeth Sverbeyeff Byron*



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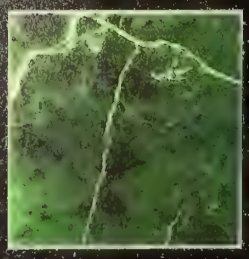


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FRENCH AND IRREVERENT

(Continued from page 140) sophisticated greenish-yellow which owed a lot of its appeal to a patina of accumulated city dirt to an architectural terra-cotta-pink shade. The new color is meant to flatter people as well as furniture and gilt bronze.

A pair of bold Venetian chinoiserie figures on high pedestals with a chinoiserie stove between them remain where Fred had always had them down in front of two immense windows. Equally essential were some flamboyant but somehow also subtle carved-wood curtains that suited the family fascination with trompe l'oeil. Equally imaginative is the arrangement of the furniture. Knowing full well how actual eighteenth-century rooms look, Tony takes the view that once the elements have been removed from their original context they should be treated as sculpture or objects. The big sitting room has practically no pairs of chairs because Tony and Fred always bought unusual single examples—which they often used as models for their reproductions—for themselves, and pairs for the shop. The big room is home to at least eleven and sometimes fifteen clocks, depending on Tony's mood. Each keeps a different time and chimes or strikes in an agreeably random way which he fosters as the special background music of the apartment. His young children, Freddy and Asheley, come into the two front sitting rooms but not with friends, and certain things have been done to accommodate them—such as hanging a handsome but fierce-looking bronze baroque mask high on a wall well out of their view, or putting fragile porcelains on mantels and high cupboards out of reach.

Trompe-l'oeil paintings of all sorts—Oriental and European from the seventeenth century to the present—live together on chintz-covered walls in Tony and Susan's bedroom, where an enormous Chinese trompe-l'oeil panel makes an unorthodox headboard for their bed. In the dining room Tony made a table from two big pieces of *parquet de Versailles* which he mounted on old legs, a fantasy that he enjoyed concocting like the curtains in the salon. At the moment the table is surrounded by chairs, each back of a different height, material, and period from 1680 to 1980.

Other parts of the apartment are in various stages of experimentation. Should gray flannel go on the walls of a guest room where the bed is an early Empire camp bed made in steel? Should a bedroom commode stay in the front hall where it can really be seen? Neither Tony nor Susan particularly likes table lamps to light a room, but what will the purists think of all those ormolu-mounted porcelain illuminated by track lighting?

The Victorias relish the process of charting new ground and like most collectors would never be happy with rooms that are completely furnished, finished, and final. Certainly few young couples have such fine things to experiment with. □

THE MONGIARDINO STYLE

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(Continued from page 114) phere. Just as a stage designer immerses himself in the atmosphere of a play, Mongiardino says that he immerses himself not just in the architectural nature of the house or apartment he has been commissioned to embellish but in the personality of the clients and the atmosphere they generate around them. In each case the atmosphere is of course very different; hence the variety that is such a feature of Mongiardino's work. As for his own apartment, the *Stimmung* that Mongiardino has evoked is so attractive, so palpable that one is tempted to export slabs of it to this side of the Atlantic where it might humanize some of our bleaker "*Bauhäuser.*"

Apropos the international movement, I couldn't resist asking Mongiardino about his rapports with Milan's uncompromisingly contemporary designers. "They used to criticize me," he wryly admitted, "for the solecism of using columns. But now the Post-Modernists are using columns themselves, so they can no longer take that line. And so I may be obliged to move onto something else." What an irony that his traditionalism and nostalgia should have put Mongiardino ahead of the game. □ *Editor: Mary-Sargent Ladd*